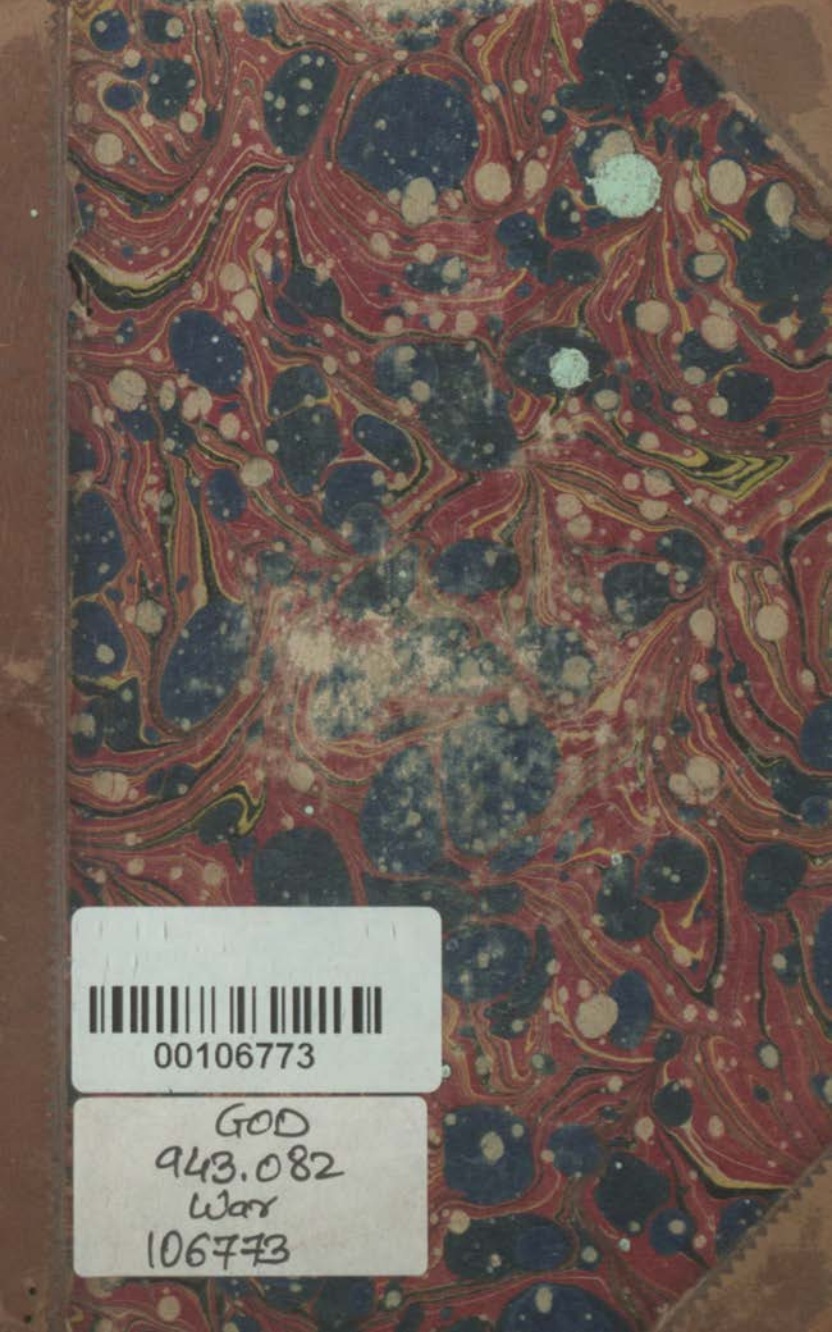
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THE DAILY NEWS

WAR CORRESPONDENCE.

THE

WAR CORRESPONDENCE

OF

THE DAILY NEWS

1870

106773

EDITED, WITH NOTES AND COMMENTS

FORMING A CONTINUOUS

NARRATIVE OF THE WAR

BETWEEN

GERMANY AND FRANCE

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WITH MAPS

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PREFACE.

THIS volume owes its origin to a desire very generally expressed that the letters of which it is composed, treating of events among the most momentous of any in the memory of this generation, should have a record at once more permanent and more convenient than the files of a daily journal. The special value of letters from camps and battle-fields consists in the vividness with which they reproduce the life and spirit of the scenes and transactions in the midst of which they are written. In the letters which have appeared in the *Daily News* since the Franco-Prussian war, the public has recognized this quality as present in an eminent degree.

Their authors, in assenting to the issue of this selection from their correspondence, do not renounce their right severally to publish the entire product of their labours in other forms.

The duties of a Newspaper Correspondent with an army are performed day by day in the face of difficulties

and dangers only inferior to those of the enrolled combatant. They are, however, discharged with a cheerful patience, which is sustained by the knowledge that the British public—the most exacting in Europe in its demand for intelligence—honours those whose zeal and enterprise secures to it information earlier, fuller, and often more worthy of credit, than that which the courts and cabinets of Europe can command.

CHRONOLOGY OF THE WAR.

JULY 14—DECEMBER 4, 1870.

July 14.

The French Government call out the army reserves.

July 15.

M. Ollivier announces in the Legislative Body that France has resolved to make war upon Prussia. Great excitement in Paris, and crowds throng the Boulevards, singing the Marseillaise, and shouting *Vive la Guerre.* The King of Prussia arrives at Berlin from Ems, and is received by upwards of 100,000 persons, who cheer him, and sing the National Anthem.

July 16.

The Emperor receives the members of the Senate at St. Cloud, and M. Rouher, in an address, says, "Your Majesty has occupied the last four years in perfecting the armament and the organization of the army." The King of Prussia and the Sovereigns of South Germany order the mobilization of their armies.

July 18.

The Legislative Body grants war credits of 515,000,000 francs.

July 21.

The North German Parliament votes supplies. The first shot of the war is fired in a skirmish near Saarbruck.

July 22.

The Prussians blow up the abutment, on the Baden shore, of the bridge at Kehl.

July 23.

A French envoy notifies to the Prussian Government a declaration of hostilities. The Emperor issues a proclamation, throwing the whole responsibility of the war upon Prussia.

July 24.

Slight skirmishes at Gersweiler and near Saarlouis. Prussian Lancers blow up the viaduct of the French railway between Sarreguemines and Haguenau. Admiral Bouet-Willaumez hoists his flag at Cherbourg, and the Empress visits the fleet.

July 28.

The Emperor leaves St. Cloud for the seat of war, and at 7 P.M. enters Metz. Fourteen French cities are proclaimed in a state of siege. The French fleet is seen off Copenhagen.

July 30.

The first detachment of the French Army of Rome arrives at Marseilles.

July 31.

The King of Prussia issues a short address "To my People," amnesties all political offences in consideration of the general uprising, and departs for the seat of war.

Aug. 2.

The French attack and carry the heights commanding Saarbruck, in presence of the Emperor and the Prince Imperial. The French mitrailleuse is used in this engagement for the first time. The *Official Journal* declares that the war has been undertaken from a desire to free the South German States and Denmark from the persecutions of Prussia.

Aug. 4.

A Council of War is held at Metz, attended by Marshals MacMachon and Bazaine, at which a plan of operations is agreed upon. On the same day, the Crown Prince of Prussia falls upon a portion of MacMahon's Army Corps at Weissenburg, and all but destroys it. General Abel Douay is killed and 800 prisoners are taken.

Aug. 6.

The Crown Prince attacks MacMahon on the hills above Wörth, and totally defeats him, with the loss of 6,000 men, thirty pieces of artillery, six mitrailleuses, and two eagles. At the same time, General Frossard's Army Corps, which holds the heights above Saarbruck, is attacked and driven back in confusion and with loss upon Metz. In Paris, a false report of a grand victory of MacMahon, who was said to have captured the Crown Prince of Prussia and his army, causes unbounded enthusiastic excitement. Suddenly it is found that the report is false, and the reaction is terrible.

Aug. 7.

A telegram from the Emperor Napoleon announces the disasters of the previous day, and adds, "All may yet be well." The Empress convokes the Chambers; the people demand arms; the department of the Seine is declared in a state of siege, and a permanent Council of the Ministry is established at the Tuileries.

Aug. 8.

The Imperial Guard, and Bazaine's, Ladmirault's, and Frossard's corps, with a portion of Canrobert's corps, concentrate at Metz.

Aug. 9.

The Chambers meet, and the Ollivier Ministry resigns. Strasburg is partially invested.

Aug. 10.

The French Army concentrates at Metz. Count Palikao forms a new Administration.

Aug. 11.

The King of Prussia addresses a Proclamation to the French people warning them not to mingle in hostilities, and promises protection to peaceable citizens.

Aug. 14.

The Prussians attack the French, late in the afternoon, near Pange and Courcelles; the fight is arrested by darkness under the walls of Metz: both sides claim the victory. The Emperor issues a farewell address at Metz, and leaves the fortress. Nancy is occupied by Prussian cavalry.

Aug. 15.

Bazaine having been appointed Commander-in-Chief, a movement of retreat begins from Metz to Verdun, and is embarrassed by Prussians near Gravelotte.

Aug. 16.

The march is resumed, and the van of Prince Frederick Charles's army, 30,000 strong, attacks Bazaine's whole army at Mars-la-Tour, under the apprehension that it is the rear-guard. A sanguinary conflict is sustained by the Prussians against superior numbers for seven hours, until the Hanoverian Corps and some Rhenish regiments turn the tide of battle, and the French are driven back.

Aug. 17.

General Trochu is appointed Commander-in-Chief of all the forces in Paris.

Aug. 18.

The attempt to cut off Bazaine's retreat is resumed, and the bloody battle of Gravelotte is fought, lasting all day, and resulting in the retiring of Bazaine into the entrenched camp of Metz.

Aug. 20.

The Camp of Châlons is broken up and the tents are burned.

Aug. 21.

MacMahon enters Rheims.

Aug. 22.

MacMahon leaves for Rethel. The Crown Prince of Saxony assumes the command of 600,000 troops to operate in the Ardennes.

Aug. 25.

MacMahon leaves Rethel, directing his army upon Montmédy by Mezières and Vouziers.

Aug. 26.

Bazaine makes an attempt to break out of Metz on the Courcelles road, but is repulsed.

Aug. 29.

MacMahon encamps with 100,000 men at Vaux, between Mouzon and Carignan, and De Failly between Beaumont and Stonne.

Aug. 30.

De Failly, on the left bank of the Meuse, and MacMahon on the right, are attacked, and lose 7,000 prisoners, with twenty guns and camp equipage. The Emperor narrowly escapes to Sedan.

Aug. 31.

A desultory engagement between the plain of Douzy and Bazeilles. The French fall back on Sedan. Bazaine makes a strenuous and sustained attempt to break out towards Thionville.

Sept. 1.

A great and decisive action fought before and around Sedan. Thousands of French escape to the Belgian frontier. 20,000 French prisoners are made.

Sept. 2.

Marshal MacMahon having been wounded, and transferred his command to General Wimpffen, the latter signs a capitulation, surrendering the whole army—80,000 men—prisoners of war. An immense quantity of military stores, cannons, including mitrailleuses, and horses, fall into the victors' hands. The Emperor sends his sword to the King of Prussia, who appoints him a residence as a prisoner of war.

Sept. 4.

The advance guard of the German army at Sedan sets out for Paris. At Paris, the French Emperor is declared to have forfeited the rights conferred by the Constitution, and a new Government of National Defence is formed.

Sept. 5.

The King of Prussia enters Rheims.

Sept. 10.

General Hame, commanding at Laon, surrenders the citadel in order to save the town. After the Prussians have entered, an explosion takes place, in which fifty Prussians and 300 Gardes Mobiles are killed. General Hame is placed under arrest (but subsequently declared innocent) by the Prussians.

An order of the Government requires the owners of provisions and forage in the neighbourhood of Paris to remove them to the capital.

Sept. 19.

The Germans arrive in force before Paris. General Ducrot engages a Bavarian corps on the heights of Châtillon, and is defeated.

Sept. 20.

The last regular mail goes out of Paris.

Sept. 21.

The investment of Paris is completed. A German force appears at Nemours and Pithiviers.

Sept. 23.

Toul capitulates.

Sept. 27.

The Germans occupy Orleans. The garrison and fortress of Strasburg are surrendered, 17,000 men laying down their arms.

Sept. 30.

A sortie from Paris, towards Chevilly and L'Hay.

Oct. 5.

The head-quarters of the King of Prussia are removed to Versailles.

Oct. 7.

Marshal Bazaine makes a great sortie from Metz, and, after fighting for five hours, is repulsed with a loss of 2,500 men.

Oct. 10.

General Reyan, commanding a division of the French Army of the Loire, is defeated at Artenay by General von der Tann, and loses 2,000 prisoners.

Oct. 11.

The Germans occupy Orleans.

Oct. 16.

Soissons capitulates.

Oct. 24.

Schelestadt capitulates.

Oct. 27.

The army of Marshal Bazaine and the fortress of Metz capitulate. 173,000 prisoners, including three marshals and sixty-six generals, surrender, and 3,000 cannon are taken.

Nov. 8.

Verdun capitulates.

Nov. 9.

General von der Tann is defeated at Coulmiers and Baccon by General d'Aurelle de Paladine, and Orleans is re-occupied by the French.

Nov. 10.

Neu Breisach capitulates.

Nov. 17.

The Grand Duke of Mecklenburg, with the right wing of the Prussian covering army south of Paris, assumes the offensive, drives the French out of Dreux, and advances towards Le Mans.

Nov. 19.

A band of 560 men, under Ricciotti Garibaldi, surprises a detachment of 800 Prussians at Châtillon-sur-Seine, and make 160 prisoners.

Nov. 22.

Twenty thousand Prussians occupy Bellême, in the department of Orne.

Nov. 24.

Thionville capitulates.

Nov. 26.

The Garibaldians, under the leadership of their General, attack the Prussians near Dijon, and are repulsed, the Mobiles being seized with panic, and throwing the whole corps into confusion.

Nov. 27.

The French Army of the North defeated at Buchy, near Amiens. La Fère capitulates.

Nov. 28.

General Manteuffel enters Amiens. General d'Aurelle attacks the east wing of the Prussian Army of the Loire at Beaune-le-Roland: each side claims the victory.

Nov. 29.

A heavy fire from all the forts of Paris is followed by a sortie under Vinoy in the direction of L'Hay, due south of Paris, which is repulsed.

Nov. 30.

Generals Trochu and Ducrot, with 90,000 men, make a sortie against the Würtemberg and Saxon positions, south-east of Paris, and occupy Champigny, Brie, and Villiers; a less important attack being made at the same time north-east of Paris.

Dec. 1.

General Chanzy, with the 16th Corps of the Army of the Loire, attacks General von der Tann near Patay, and defeats him, in an engagement lasting six hours.

Dec. 2.

The Würtembergers and Saxons before Paris retake the positions lost two days before. Another sortie from Paris follows ; the positions are found untenable by the Germans. The Duke of Mecklenburg defeats the left wing of the French Army of the Loire, which had been victorious the day before, and inflicts very heavy loss upon it. Prince Frederick Charles, by manœuvring, separates the centre and right of the French Army of the Loire, and drives the former on the road to Orleans.

Dec. 4.

The German army, concentrated, pushes the French, under General d'Aurelle, back upon Orleans, and demands the evacuation of that city. General Ducrot withdraws his entire army from the east of the Marne, and announces that a new sortie will be attempted, under more favourable circumstances.

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THE WAR CORRESPONDENCE

OF THE

"DAILY NEWS."

CHAPTER I.

On the 5th of July, 1870, an Englishman might have read his newspaper, transacted business in the City, visited his club or the House of Commons, and returned to his family, without having once been asked what he thought of the stability of the peace of Europe. It was on that day that Earl Granville took possession of the Foreign Office, and in so doing was told by the able permanent head of that department that "in all his experience he had never known so great a lull in foreign affairs." Four-and-twenty hours afterwards the merchant was reviewing his liabilities, the banker his reserves, the capitalist his commitments; for there were signs that a storm was at hand. The Generals who controlled the destinies of Spain had made an agreement under which Prince Leopold of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen, a kinsman of the King of Prussia, but in one of the *lignes non-régnantes* of his house, should be presented to the Cortes as their candidate for the vacant Spanish throne, and the public was quick to perceive that such a project would certainly excite the susceptibilities of

France, which, since Sadowa, had been keen to apprehend and swift to resent any movements tending to increase the European influence of the Prussian State. At Paris, the news caused a violent outbreak of political feeling, and even the most moderate and enlightened of the French journals appealed to the national sentiment in the language of passion. The *Temps* exclaimed that the monarchy of Charles V. was being revived, and the *Débats* refused to believe that a scheme so monstrous was possible. When it was announced at Madrid that Prince Leopold gave his consent, and that the Cortes would be invited to elect him King, the French Government at once declared, in the Legislature, by the mouth of the Duc de Gramont, that the scheme "imperilled the interests and honour of France." The French newspapers ostentatiously announced that they were no longer able to publish announcements relating to the movements of troops. M. Benedetti, the French Minister at the Court of Berlin, went to seek the King of Prussia at Ems. The influence of England was at once exerted both at Paris and at Berlin to avert the threatening danger, and on the 8th of July Lord Lyons received from the Duc de Gramont the assurance that the voluntary renunciation of his candidature by Prince Leopold would be "a most fortunate solution" of the difficulty.

On the 10th, the Duc de Gramont changed his language, and said that the King of Prussia having given his consent—that of the head of the family—to the Prince's candidature, "the affair had become beyond all controversy one between France and the King." On the 12th, Prince Leopold notified to the French Government that he had renounced his candidature, and Lord Lyons thereupon pointed out to the Duc de Gramont that all cause of war was now removed. The French Minister replied that France was very much excited, and that the Government could not go down to the Chamber without announcing that it had received "some

satisfaction" from the King of Prussia. To the Prussian Minister at Paris, it was intimated that the King might immediately put an end to the crisis if he would write a letter of apology to the Emperor. To Lord Lyons it was stated, that if the King would lay his royal command upon the Prince Leopold not to resume his candidature at any future time, peace might be preserved. On the other hand, Count Bismarck was explaining to the British Minister at Berlin, that France owed a reparation to the wounded feelings of Germany, and that its Government must give some guarantee against the repetition of these attacks on her tranquillity, if confidence was to be restored. Prince Leopold had renounced his candidature, and this was the time for the French Government to do justice to Germany, by publicly acknowledging the moderate and peaceful bearing of the King and Government of Prussia throughout these transactions. While these contradictory views were being asserted at Paris and Berlin, M. Benedetti was preparing, more or less consciously, at Ems the occasion of a decisive rupture between the two Powers. On the morning of July 13th, the King of Prussia, walking on the Fountain Promenade at Ems, saw the French Ambassador, and gave him an extra number of the *Cologne Gazette*, containing an announcement that Prince Leopold had renounced his candidature. M. Benedetti observed that he was already aware of that fact, and on the King proceeding to speak of the matter as at length settled, the French Minister made the unexpected request that his Majesty should give a distinct assurance that he would never again give his consent to that candidature, should it be revived. This the King firmly declined to do, although M. Benedetti again and again urged his proposal. Some hours afterwards, the French Minister sought a further audience, stating that he wished to recur to the subject spoken of in the morning. The King refused a fresh audience on the ground that he

could return no other answer than the one already given, and intimated that all further negotiations must proceed regularly through the Ministers. On the 14th of July last M. Benedetti left Ems, after an informal but amicable leave-taking of the King. On the same evening, the Berlin journals published a short communicated paragraph, announcing that after the renunciation of Prince Leopold had been officially communicated to the French Government, the French Ambassador, at Ems, had further demanded certain engagements of the King, and that "His Majesty thereon declined to receive the French Ambassador again, and had him told, by the adjutant in attendance, that His Majesty had nothing further to communicate to the Ambassador." It was this communication that the French Government put forward as the determining cause of the war. On the 15th of July, the Duc de Gramont told Lord Lyons that "the Prussian Government had deliberately insulted France, by declaring to the public that the King had affronted the French Ambassador. It was evidently the intention of the Government of Prussia to take credit with the people of Germany for having acted with haughtiness and discourtesy—in fact, to humiliate France." On the same day, M. Ollivier read in the Corps Législatif a communication, which was received by that body, and throughout Europe, as equivalent to a declaration of war. After describing the course of the negotiations, and adopting the final demands of M. Benedetti upon the King of Prussia, M. Ollivier said that, "under these circumstances, the Government would have forgotten its dignity, and also its prudence, had it not made preparations. We have," said the Minister, "prepared to maintain the war which is offered to us, leaving to each that portion of the responsibility which devolves upon him. Since yesterday we have called out the reserves, and we shall take the necessary measures to guard the interest, and the security, and the honour of France." This

declaration was received with enthusiastic and prolonged applause. The *Constitutionnel* published an article concluding with exclamations—"Prussia insults us, let us cross the Rhine. The soldiers of Jena are ready!" The Boulevards were thronged with students and others, marching in procession, and crying, "À bas la Prusse!"—"À bas Bismarck!" —"Vive la guerre!" and "À Berlin!"

In Berlin, the patriotic feeling of the people was as deeply excited, and as freely expressed. Late in the evening of the 15th, the King arrived in the capital, and was received with indescribable enthusiasm. Upwards of 100,000 persons were assembled from the Railway Station at the Brandenburg Gate to the Palace, cheering and singing the national anthem. The promenade Unter den Linden was illuminated, and decorated with the North German and Prussian flags. King William came forward repeatedly to the windows of the Palace, saluting and thanking the crowd. Addresses were also received by the King from the merchants of Bremen and Stettin, expressing readiness to make the utmost sacrifices for the defence of the country, and promising approval to the most energetic steps that might be taken for the preservation of the national honour; and throughout the country, similar manifestations were common.

From this time, although the formal declaration of war was delayed for a few days, each Government was committed to the struggle, and began its military preparations in earnest. In France it was believed—except by a few persons who had the reputation of believing nothing that was creditable to the Empire—that the preparations of the French army for war were as complete as its military superiority to every army of Europe was notorious. Questions, however, were asked on the subject, and Marshal Lebœuf, the French Minister of War, declared before a committee of the Corps Législatif, that the army was "ready—aye thrice

ready—for war;" and that no further grant of time was required to perfect its efficiency. The reserves were called out, and absentees were summoned to rejoin their corps. Day after day regiments passed through Paris on their way to the Rhine, receiving on their progress the most gratifying marks of popular sympathy. The composition of a vast French army was at once announced to the world. Seven Army Corps, under marshals and generals who had maintained and increased the renown of France at Magenta and Solferino, at Rome, in Mexico, and in Algeria, were stationed on a line extending from Thionville on the Moselle to Belfort, which, in the Gap of that name, guards the approaches to Central France against any attacks proceeding from Germany. The Fourth Corps, under General Ladmirault, was near Thionville; the Second, under General Frossard, was near St. Avold; the Fifth, under General de Failly, was at Bitsche; and the First, under Marshal MacMahon, was in and around Strasburg. The Seventh Corps, under General Felix Douay, was at Belfort. Behind Ladmirault, and near Metz, was Marshal Bazaine, with his Third Corps; the Sixth Corps, under Marshal Canrobert, was at Châlons; and the Imperial Guard, under General Bourbaki, was on its way from Paris to act as a reserve. Various estimates of the strength of these corps were circulated. It was common, towards the end of July, to assume in discussion that from 300,000 to 400,000 men stood under the Imperial eagles, waiting for the order to advance against the enemy. The journal at that time commanding the largest circulation in Paris declared that "France had never before brought so fine an army into the field in so short a time." Confidence was greatly increased by the information given as to the superior arms with which the French troops took the field. The infantry were armed with the Chassepôt, believed to be the queen of rifles; and forty-two batteries of mitrailleuses—a new and murderous weapon—had been despatched to Metz.

The leading English newspapers, apprehending the historical importance of this war, made preparations for obtaining information on a scale which had never been surpassed in the history of the European newspaper press, and gentlemen of experience, as well as literary writers, offered themselves, to follow and record the movements and operations of the hostile armies. But the French Government was slow to authorize the presence of neutral observers within the lines of its armies, and in the end that authorization was distinctly refused. The interview of a special correspondent with M. Emile Ollivier, described in the *Daily News* of July 20th, it not only shows the nature of the difficulties thrown in the way of English observers, but is interesting as disclosing the feeling of the French Government towards England at the commencement of the war:—

I have been twice to-day to the hotel of the Minister of War, to ask for a safe conduct which would allow of my passing freely through the camps. In both cases I was informed with distressing politeness that the subject of correspondents was one to which the Minister of War had not yet devoted his attention, but that I might, if I chose and could get there, repair to the command of any one of the generals. Once there, everything would rest with them. It was considerately added, that there was a possibility of generals disliking correspondents, and of either arresting them or sending them back to Paris. Having an introduction to M. Emile Ollivier, I managed to obtain access to a secretary, who kindly informed me that M. Ollivier was then at St. Cloud, and would be at the Legislature at noon, but possibly might be at home at one. At one I returned, and a little later M. Ollivier received me. I had expected he would simply inform me whether I could obtain the desired safe conduct or

not; but when I found that he entered into more general subjects, I asked whether I might communicate to you his conversation—a permission which he granted without reserve. I will accordingly try to give the conversation as I heard his share of it, well knowing the great difficulty of reducing such a verbal communication to writing. M. Ollivier began by telling me that the War Minister, General Lebœuf, objected to all foreign correspondents, and also to French ones. He would positively have no writer with the French army, or at least such was the present determination, which might indeed be afterwards modified. He then expressed his extreme sorrow at the attitude of the English Press, which he said was based upon a complete misapprehension of the true causes of the war. M. Ollivier seemed not so much vexed or annoyed, as grieved at the comments in our journals. He complained that the Emperor had always been more than friendly towards England, that he himself had done everything to promote warm relations between the two countries, that especially he had studied the commercial interests of England, but that now he was accused of breaking the peace of Europe. As to Germany, he had taken office on the condition that there should be no German war; the Emperor, too, was well aware of the responsibility involved, and most anxious not to destroy the state of peace; but it was impossible to permit Prussia to drag them through the mud by an insult openly and publicly avowed. Indeed, in the legitimate interests of the dynasty, M. Ollivier had been obliged to entertain the idea of war. France could not brook an insult, or at least a deliberate one. Her rulers, under Louis Philippe, had, it is true, once made her swallow one, but this was the cause of the downfall of the Orleanist family. The exact sequence of events which caused the war was as follows:—The Prussian King had at first made con-

cessions. This had aroused against him a German war party; to conciliate this body he had given France an insult and published it (it was the publication upon which M. Ollivier most dwelt). The Chassepôt must now decide; but as France was united to a man, there was no doubt of the eventual result. I have tried to exactly report what M. Ollivier said, but I can convey to you no idea of the power—the "verve" would, perhaps, be the best word—with which he spoke. I asked his permission to argue the question why correspondents should be excluded from the field. This permission he gave as a matter of course, and I then pointed out that if two parties were engaged in a quarrel, and that if English correspondents were welcomed by one side and excluded by the other, it was only believing in human nature to suppose that the combatants whose hopes, whose fears, whose struggles, were painted each day to educated England, would at length become mistress of English sympathies. I instanced the 1866 war, in which England undoubtedly at first sympathized with the Austrians, but in which the correspondents, encouraged by one party, snubbed and muzzled by the other, to an immense extent helped to bring English opinion round to Northern Germany. I also gave him one instance in which, to my personal knowledge, the Prussians had sought for an English writer in the present war. I pointed out how easily correspondents might be controlled so as to prevent their giving hurtful information of the massing of troops, &c.

To an unexpected extent M. Ollivier acquiesced in these arguments; but I fear it was the acquiescence of politeness, not of conviction. He promised to report them all to General Lebœuf, who he distinctly gave me to understand was the real arbiter in this matter. So closed my audience. As to M. Ollivier's manner while

it continued, the only faint idea that I can give of its perfection is to say that all through I had great difficulty in remembering the exalted position which he holds, so completely did he put me at my ease and treat me on a footing of equality.

I have now to make a few remarks upon the above, but not as to the political questions. They are no doubt important, but they are not within my *métier*. As to the correspondent question, with all my respect for General Lebœuf as an organizer and strategist, I think he is utterly wrong. Correspondents could do harm if they were allowed to telegraph what they chose, but this is easily prevented. The real reason that generals object to writers in their camp is because they dislike and resent criticism. To a class—only a class—of military men, criticism from beings who are not at least a grade above them is not merely distasteful—it is unendurable. Still General Lebœuf ought to be above that feeling. His view might be unobjectionable if the sympathies of a nation did not follow its press. The first Napoleon said that the army should be one with the nation, the nation one with the army. Under the modern conditions of society, the French press can alone effect that in France; while the same country may bid good-bye to the sympathies of England if she excludes, while Prussia (as I believe) encourages writers. I forgot to say that M. Ollivier hinted—I don't think he said—that a victory would determine exterior sympathies; a remark with a great deal of truth, but which does not comprise the whole question. Another point in M. Ollivier's conversation struck me. He incidentally said the Chassepôt must now resolve the question; but he did not seem to take any interest in the technical details of the subject. There M. Ollivier was right; probably he relied on this all-important fact being the opinion of others; but I

have personally no doubt that the Chassepôt will do a great deal for the French. As far as breech action is concerned, the Chassepôt is only a trifle better than the original needle-gun; it is a shade quicker in loading, and has a shade less "crachement," or spitting, than the needle-gun, and so disturbs less the aim of its firer; but in the barrel, it is all Lombard Street to a China orange on the Chassepôt. The needle-gun has a barrel designed long before 1860. The French barrel was blocked out with all the superior science of 1866. The needle-gun has a poor trajectory at anything like a decent range (500 yards), and wounds rather than kills; the Chassepôt bullet, driven by a huge relative charge of powder, has a magnificently flat trajectory, and, flattening out, makes a terrible hole. There are certainly some improved needle-guns; but an arm must be re-designed, not patched, to secure victory. With regard to British arms, the Chassepôt has an inferior breech action, but an infinitely better barrel than the Snider; while it is in all respects below the Henry-Martini, of which we have only 200, and these hand-made. The Emperor has just driven by the Rue de Rivoli, amidst loud cheers.

As a brilliant initiative had always been numbered among the military traditions of France, and as, moreover, the positions assigned to the French Army Corps pointed unmistakably to an invasion of Germany, surprise was expressed, as days, and even weeks, passed on, that the French Emperor did not avail himself of the early preparation of his army to strike a blow at Germany before her sovereigns had time to collect their forces. We know now that such had been the Emperor's intention. In a publication which has appeared under his sanction, and which he is understood to have dic-

tated,* he has given an account of his military plan. The Emperor states that he knew that Prussia was ready to call out, in a short time, 900,000 men, and, with the aid of the Southern States of Germany, could count upon 1,100,000 soldiers. France was only able to muster 600,000; and, as the number of fighting men is never more than one-half the actual effective force, Germany was in a position to bring into the field 550,000 men, whilst France had only about 300,000 to confront the enemy. To compensate for this numerical inferiority, it was necessary for the Emperor, by a rapid movement, to cross the Rhine, separate Southern Germany from the North German Confederation, and, by the *éclat* of a first success, secure the alliance of Austria and Italy. If he were able to prevent the armies of Southern Germany from forming their junction with those of the north, the effective strength of the Prussians would be reduced by 200,000 men; and the disproportion between the number of combatants thus much diminished. If Austria and Italy made common cause with France, then the superiority of numbers would be in her favour. The Emperor's plan of campaign—which he confided, at Paris, to Marshals MacMahon and Lebœuf alone—was to mass 150,000 men at Metz, 100,000 at Strasburg, and 50,000 at the Camp of Châlons. The concentration of the first two armies, one on the Sarre and the other on the Rhine, did not reveal his projects; for the enemy was left in uncertainty as to whether the attack would be made against the Rhenish Provinces or upon the Duchy of Baden. As soon as the troops should have been concentrated at the points indicated, it was the Emperor's purpose to immediately unite

* "Campagne de 1870 : des Causes qui ont amené la Capitulation de Sedan. Par un Officier attaché à l'Etat Major-Général. Bruxelles."

the two armies of Metz and Strasburg; and, at the head of 250.000 men, to cross the Rhine at Maxau, leaving at his right the fortress of Rastadt, and, at his left, that of Germersheim. Reaching the other side of the Rhine, he would have forced the States of the South to observe neutrality, and would then have hurried on to encounter the Prussians. Whilst this movement was in course of execution, the 50,000 men at Châlons, under the command of Marshal Canrobert, were to proceed to Metz, to protect the rear of the army and guard the north-eastern frontier. At the same time the French fleet cruising in the Baltic would have held stationary, in the north of Prussia, a part of the enemy's forces, obliged to defend the coasts threatened with invasion.

We shall soon see why this scheme could not be executed, important as it was that Napoleon should assume the offensive. It was on the 28th of July, nearly a fortnight after the declaration of war, that the Emperor reached his head-quarters at Metz. But, even then, for a week nothing was heard of him. During that week the German hosts had been mustering from the extremities of the Fatherland. The twelve Army Corps of the North German Confederation, with the Prussian Guard Corps d'Armée, the Bavarian Field Army, and the Würtemberg and Baden Divisions, were formed into three armies, and placed under the command of General Von Steinmetz, Prince Frederick Charles of Prussia, and his cousin, the Crown Prince. The largest of these armies, that of Prince Frederick Charles, assembled at Mayence. The corps of Steinmetz united about Treves, and the Crown Prince's army, which included the South German troops, met near Landau. This disposition, made in such perfect secrecy that, as the Emperor pathetically complains in the work to which we have referred, the French never could tell

where the enemy was—was planned in order that if the Emperor should advance from Metz through the Vosges, he should be confronted at or before Mayence by the army of Prince Frederick Charles, nearly equal to his own in strength. But the Emperor's movements were still delayed. Some observers said that he hesitated, others that he had no plan. He himself has declared that at this time the forces on which he had counted were not forthcoming. With reference to this particular period he has written:—

> The army of Metz, instead of 150,000 men, only mustered 100,000; that of Strasburg only 40,000, instead of a 100,000; whilst the corps of Marshal Canrobert had still one division at Paris and another at Soissons; his artillery, as well as his cavalry, was not ready. Further, no army corps was even yet completely furnished with the equipments necessary for taking the field. The Emperor gave precise orders to the effect that the arrival of the missing regiments should be pushed on; but he was obeyed slowly, excuse being made that it was impossible to leave Algeria, Paris, and Lyons without garrisons.

Such were some of the causes of the Emperor's inaction. But they were not, they could not be, known in Paris. There it was firmly believed that at any moment the armies of the Empire, at a word from their chief, might descend like an avalanche on Germany, and impatience was expressed because that word remained unspoken. To give a temporary satisfaction to this feeling, the Emperor, knowing the deficiencies of his own army, and, as he has since admitted, in complete ignorance of the positions of his enemy, determined upon a movement which for an instant seemed to announce the opening of the campaign. By the beginning of August the Imperial Guard had joined Bazaine at Metz; Canrobert had moved from Châlons to Nancy; and

MacMahon's corps was advancing from Strasburg to the Lauter. The military leaders of Germany had exerted themselves to the utmost to be able to oppose the advance of the French, and were aided by a military and patriotic enthusiasm which veterans and the students of history could liken to nothing but that which glowed during the War of Liberation. Every day saw enormous accessions to the armies of Prince Frederick Charles and General Von Steinmetz; and although, when the French at length stirred themselves, there still remained some corps whose numbers were not complete, the great German army united under the King of Prussia was officially declared to be ready for war.

On the 2nd of August the Emperor left Metz by railway for Forbach, taking with him the Prince Imperial. His Majesty has since stated that the business of the day was to ascertain the numbers and position of the enemy. From Forbach the Emperor proceeded at once in the direction of Saarbruck, a Prussian frontier town, occupied by a small advanced guard. A French division, under General Bataille, carried the heights of Spicheren, on the right of Saarbruck, without difficulty; and the Prussians, after a resistance which had no military object, withdrew to their next line of defence. The affair lasted only from 11 in the forenoon until 2 P.M., and after it the Emperor returned to Metz to dinner. But as the battle had been fought for political reasons, care was taken to give it importance. No battle could be insignificant at which the Emperor had been present, and the despatches transmitted to Paris announced therein a victory with two interesting features. The mitrailleuse gun, from which so much was expected, had been tried, and the Prince Imperial had received his "baptism of fire." Ten mitrailleuses were in battery, and at each discharge, it was said, the enemy's battalions were mowed down. The French newspapers

declared that the moral effect of this victory must be immense. It appeared, however, that some of their own correspondents, venturing into Sàarbruck on the very afternoon of the day when the French were supposed to have taken the place, were arrested by the pickets of the Prussians, who had returned, after an absence of two hours; that the railway, which it was supposed the French had wished to occupy, or at least to cut, was entire; and that the forest behind Saarbruck was alive with Prussian troops. Greater events were soon to make the world indifferent to the incidents of this smallest of *promenades militaires*.

CHAPTER II.

THE demonstration at Saarbruck had led to nothing. If it was intended as an advance, no ground had been occupied; if it was a reconnaissance, nothing had been ascertained. Two days afterwards, the Emperor's trusted counsellor, Marshal MacMahon, was at Metz, attending a council of war. On that day the first serious blow of the campaign fell upon one of his divisions, which he had left near Weissenburg, a town on the Lauter, exactly at the frontier, with crushing effect. This division, commanded by General Abel Douay, had been left to guard the opening between the Vosges and the Rhine, whilst the other divisions of MacMahon's Corps advanced northward, to approach de Failly. On the 3rd of August, the Crown Prince of Prussia was approaching the frontier with a force of more than 120,000 men; but although Douay had some suspicion of his movement, and had sent out patrols which fell in with the Bavarian cavalry, he was taken by surprise. He had pitched his camp within two miles of a frontier which was covered with woods, which concealed the movements of his powerful enemy, and in this dangerous position he seems to have dispensed with guards. The Prince advanced with four divisions—about 40,000 men—against Douay, whose troops were cooking their morning meal when the German army appeared on the heights above Schweigen, and the enemy's shells began to fall into their camp. The French rushed to arms with all their old ardour: line regiments vied with *corps d'élite* and the Turcos fought like lions. But nothing could prevail

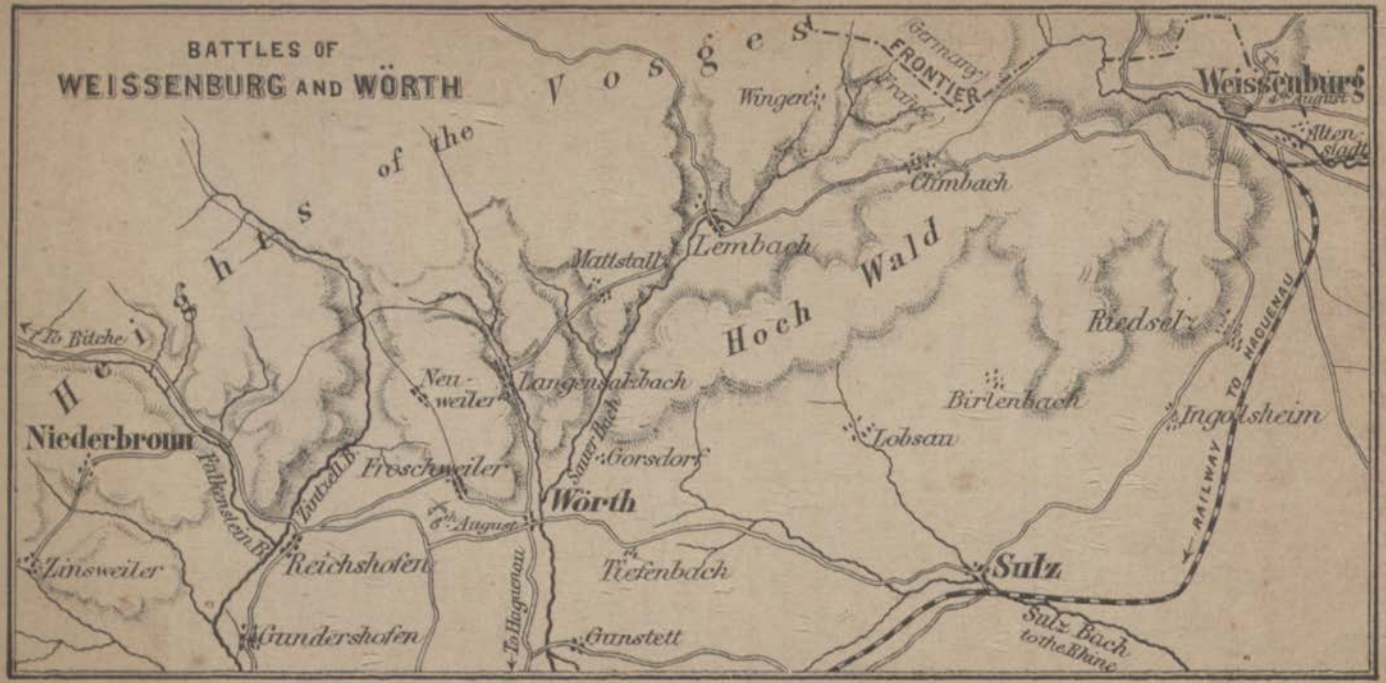
against the steady determination of the Germans, fighting with the advantage of immensely superior numbers and against unprepared troops. The French, completely overpowered, lost their commander, who was killed by a shell; and when the Germans had stormed the Geisburg, the whole French line broke in confusion, leaving tents, weapons, and baggage in the hands of the victor. A correspondent of the *Daily News*, who was with the French army, transmitted the following brief account of the action :—

Whilst General Douay's division, composed of the 74th and 50th Regiments of the line, the 16th Battalion of Chasseurs on foot, one regiment of Turcos, and a regiment of mounted Chasseurs, were encamped in the neighbourhood of Weissenburg, they were startled by a tremendous discharge of artillery. As the patrols, which had been posted all along the line of the frontier, had not signalled the presence of any Prussian troops, the men believed for a moment that they were surrounded by the enemy. This was not the case; but the Prussians, in great force, and well supplied with artillery, appeared on the heights of Schweigen, occupying the whole of the country near the small Bavarian village. General Douay ordered his troops to advance before the enemy, keeping as much as possible behind Weissenburg, which lay just between them and the Prussian forces. But this precaution proved quite useless, for the guns were pouring a tremendous fire upon them, and the troops were falling in great numbers in the village of Weissenburg itself. The French retired from their former position, and commenced marching on the right side of the village. The Prussian guns were firing at a tremendous rate, and three rounds fell partly in the town and partly among the troops. Several of the houses were set on fire, and a good number of soldiers lay dead or wounded. At

about eleven o'clock General Voscan's division began to retire. However, a new attack was ordered. The Turcos led the way, and, bayonet in hand, threw themselves on one of the Prussian batteries of artillery. All proved useless. Had the French insisted on attacking the enemy any longer there would not have been one of them left alive on the ground. As soon as what was left of General Douay's forces began retiring the Prussian artillery pursued them. About twelve o'clock General Douay himself fell a victim to the Prussian artillery. The troops commenced running without order, crossing roads and vineyards until they reached the farthest part of Weissenburg. The number of dead and wounded must have been very large indeed. The remaining troops are eager to revenge the death of their general. The country people seem to be in great consternation. The roads which lead to Haguenau are covered with peasants carrying their goods and cattle with them, and lamenting over the sad fate reserved for their humble cottages.

It was here that the French first became aware of the efficiency of the new Prussian artillery, which, since the Bohemian campaign, had been very greatly improved in force and weight of fire. On the night of the 4th, the streets of Haguenau presented the strange spectacle—so often to be renewed in this war—of throngs of fugitive soldiers, excited and clamorous, explaining their defeat to astonished civilians, easy to be persuaded that only some extraordinary failure or reversal of the very course of nature, could have brought about the retreat of a French army. The Crown Prince had fought this action before his two cavalry divisions had come up, or his troops would have taken more than 600 prisoners and one gun ; and the flight of the French was so rapid that subsequent attempts at pursuit were made in vain. It could not be pretended that this combat afforded any

measure of the military value of the two armies, but it deeply impressed the mind both of France and Europe The Crown Prince's sudden movement, exhibited German rapidity and decision in contrast with French vacillation and delay; it betokened on the part of the Germans a purpose and a plan, and gave them the prestige of a victory on the territory of the Power which had challenged them to war. The Parisians began to doubt the wisdom that presided over the conduct of the campaign; but their confidence in the army was rather raised than weakened by the reports of heroic feats performed by individuals and separate corps, and they firmly believed that Weissenburg would be terribly revenged. Marshal MacMahon, who had heard at Metz of the disaster which had befallen Douay's corps, hastened to join his remaining divisions, stationed beyond Haguenau, and arrest the movement of his vigorous enemy. He had three divisions of his own Army Corps intact—besides a division which Felix Douay had sent from Belfort, and a cuirassier brigade of Canrobert's corps, and the remains of the divisions which had been defeated at Weissenburg. With these troops—in all about 50,000 men—he occupied, on the 5th, a strong defensive position on the slopes of the Vosges, his object being to cover the chief lines of communication between the eastern and western sides of that mountain range and the line of railway from Strasburg to Bitsche. His left rested on Reichshofen, his centre was on the eminences between Fröschweiler and Wörth, and his right extended to beyond Elsasshausen. His front was semicircular, presenting a convex line to the enemy, and his position, owing to the difficult ground on all sides, one very strong for defence. A force attempting to pass him here by the road to Haguenau, would have exposed its flank to attack, while the road through the Vosges could only be gained after he had been dislodged. The Crown Prince arrived from Weissenburg on the evening of the 5th, with an army



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of 130,000 men, and found MacMahon waiting for him on the heights. At seven on the morning of the 6th the battle began. It is alleged by various authorities that the Prince had not intended to attack so soon; that the action was brought on by the uncontrollable eagerness of the outposts; and that this is one explanation of certain unsteady and irregular movements which marred its earlier plans.

The battle was brought on by the outpost firing in front of Wörth before the Crown Prince's army had completed its intended change of front; and as the French directed their fire against Wörth, the artillery of the Prussian 5th Corps was stationed on the heights east of that place. A misunderstanding of an order given to Hartmann's 2nd Bavarian Corps led to their withdrawal, and Marshal MacMahon then threw himself with great vigour on the 5th Prussian Corps. It was then that the great struggle of the day took place. For two hours the two armies fought as if the issue of the campaign depended on their valour, but the arrival of the 11th Prussian Corps compelled the French to fall back on their centre and resume the defensive. The losses on each side were enormous, the strength of the French position counterbalancing to a great extent the superior numbers of the Germans, and at one time the issue seemed doubtful. The Crown Prince describes the resistance of the enemy as "most obstinate and intense." By two o'clock the combat had extended along the centre line. At this time orders were given to the Würtemberg division to turn Reichshofen, and threaten to cut off MacMahon's line of retreat, while a Bavarian corps was sent to turn the French right. These movements succeeded: both at Elsasshausen and at Reichshofen the French saw themselves outflanked by powerful corps. The French line within an hour was broken, and the right centre and left were thrown into disorder. At this crisis of the battle Marshal MacMahon attempted to redeem

the fortunes of the day by a grand charge of the brigade of Cuirassiers which he had borrowed from Canrobert's corps. Its advance was an extraordinary and splendid spectacle; but it was made against the artillery of the 5th and 11th Prussian Corps, and ended in a grand catastrophe, horses and men rolling together by hundreds in the dust. The Prussian cavalry had not yet joined, but on the 7th the pursuit of the fugitives was continued by the Baden and Würtemberg brigades, and the Crown Prince reported officially that he had taken 5,000 unwounded prisoners, thirty guns, six mitrailleuses, and two eagles.

The Special Correspondent of the *Daily News* with the army of the Crown Prince wrote, on the 10th of August, from head-quarters :—

The swift and skilful movement against Weissenburg, resulting in complete success to the German arms, was but a foretaste of the storm which threatened the northern part of Alsace. On the second day after Weissenburg came the battle of Wörth, and the Crown Prince gained a great victory over the ablest general in France. It is admitted that the French fought with reckless courage, and that they inflicted heavy loss on their opponents, but the fact of this hard fighting and of this heavy loss shows how serious a defeat was sustained by MacMahon. I traversed the battlefield whilst the dead still lay unburied on the trampled ground, and could form a good notion of how the fight had gone by the ghastly evidence which remained. Wörth is at the bottom of a fertile valley between two ridges of cultivated ground. There is a quantity of woodland in the neighbourhood, and especially behind the French position, or on the western side of the valley, there is a strip of forest which forms a cover for retreating troops. The little River Bruder, not deep enough in summer-time to float a skiff,

flows through the village, and a high road comes winding down towards it on the eastern side of the valley, flanked by trees. Here was the German position, stretching far to right and left. Along this road were heaps of spiked helmets to be seen, and cart-loads of needle-guns collected under the trees. At a distance the French musketry fire had told more heavily than the German, and I heard that the French artillery had been very well served. But though the burying parties were busy with the German dead on this eastern side of Wörth, there was more than an exchange of slaughterous work on the western side. Here the Prussians and Bavarians had pushed forward in strong force, and their fire had told fearfully upon the French. The high spirit and rigid discipline of the one army had been more than a match for the desperate resistance of the other. Whole companies of Frenchmen had been mowed down in their wild attempts to check the enemy's advance. It had been a tolerably equal fight in some places, for the ground was strewn with German dead. But more and more Frenchmen had fallen in proportion. Black Turcos and wide-trousered Zouaves lay thick at many points, and the Cuirassiers had suffered much. There were steel breastplates and brass helmets scattered thickly on the line of the retreat, whilst the dead horses in all directions might be counted by hundreds. And so, westward through the wood, went the traces of increasing disaster; officers and men lying grimly where they had fallen, some of them in quiet, shady spots, as though they were pic-nickers asleep; pools of blood where the wounded had been found, knapsacks, rifles, and overcoats, either thrown away in flight or left by the wounded on the field. Then came a spot where the French had rallied, and where the dead of both sides lay thick. Turcos might be seen who had evidently fought to the last, and had

tried to fire their pieces as they lay, Frenchmen of the line regiments had here and there fallen in numbers, as though having halted and faced about in regular order. But the aspect of the fields beyond the wood seemed to indicate a hasty retreat. Waggons were overturned, baggage was thrown out upon the roadside, and many knapsacks were to be seen. No one who had passed over that battle-ground of Wörth when I did could have failed to realize that a great disaster had befallen the French arms, though at a time when most of the wounded had been removed, and on so large a scene of action it would have been impossible to judge of the exact loss sustained. However, I see no reason to doubt the official return on the German side, which gives about 10,000 Frenchmen and 7,000 Germans *hors de combat*, and about 7,000 prisoners taken by the victors—4,000 in the battle, and 3,000 more in the pursuit. These losses, with the further loss of cannon and colours, made Wörth an evil day for France. Well might the wounded Germans raise themselves to cheer the Crown Prince as he passed, and cry that Germany was safe. It will often be told how the armies met on the 6th of August, and how MacMahon made his unsuccessful effort to repel the invasion of Alsace, how the Prussians held the left of the line, the Bavarians and Würtembergers the right, and how a few Baden troops, held in reserve by the Crown Prince, were brought up just in time to share the honours of the day. There was a fierce attack on both sides, it being difficult to say which party began, and gradually, as the German troops pressed round upon their opponents' line of retreat, the French were forced to make so hasty a retrograde movement that the retreat became very nearly a rout. The Crown Prince handled his army so as to make the most of the deadly fire of his infantry. The cavalry was not used for an attack in the

first instance, but was sent in pursuit when the enemy began his retreat. It was a victory due to the patriotic ardour of the German troops, as much as to anything in their discipline or tactics; but we must not forget that the French showed ardour likewise, and that the scale was turned for the Germans at Wörth by their intelligent understanding of the breech-loader drill, and by their steadiness in firing. These matters take time to learn, and I hope that our volunteers will have a chance of learning them before they are called upon to face a foe who may have learnt the new weapon at his leisure. We see the glorious results which Germany is reaping from her careful preparation.

The prisoners were assembled near the first station of the re-opened railway through Weissenburg. I could see many Turcos and Zouaves among them, though the greater part were soldiers of the line. We drove past them very slowly, for the road was blocked with ammunition waggons, and I noticed that they seemed wofully discouraged. There were no songs and no laughter to be heard among them, and the few that were occupying themselves with picking fruit on trees that they had climbed had not a very lively air, for Frenchmen in such a position as fruit-picking. Then came the convoys of wounded moving to the rear. Suffering had made them brothers in misfortune. The Germans and Frenchmen mingled, with such opposite ideas about the Rhine in their heads all the while, sat or lay quietly side by side, as if they were old comrades. The only enemy, and the common enemy, too, was the jolting waggon. As we neared Wörth there was a constant stream of waggons bringing down wounded men. Prussians and Bavarians, Turcos and Frenchmen, bore the agony of the road with equal silence. It was rare to hear a cry, though the poor fellows' faces showed much pain. They were sad-

der to see in their blood-stained bandages, with suffering still about them, than the men who lay grimly on the hill sides. Wörth itself was a mere hospital, and all the inhabitants were either nursing the wounded or burying the dead. It was an evil fate for the picturesque little place that more than a hundred thousand men on one side and the other should have settled their quarrel so near at hand.

Of coming movements I must say not a word. The event of yesterday was the capture by Würtemberg troops of the little fortress of Leuchtenberg, where a large amount of military stores are reported to have been found. The assailants fired heavily into the place, and we heard their guns booming all yesterday forenoon.

Two days afterwards the same Correspondent wrote :—

The more we gather of the details of the battle of Wörth, the more clearly does it appear that there was no miracle about the affair, no sudden surprise to military critics—as though a new weapon had been discovered. From the villages in rear of the field I gather far more of the French movements than could be learned from the prisoners or the villagers upon the field itself. It would seem that the Imperial commanders in this quarter were altogether outmanœuvred by the Crown Prince; and that, whatever the merits of the respective small-arm fire, there was no comparing the tactics of the two armies. The French allowed themselves to be so placed as to have required no common degree of fighting to save them. First, we hear of their blind confidence, and of their cries of "*à Berlin*," whilst they were really in desperate danger. Then came the news of the surprise at Weissenburg and of the death of General Douay. He was posted in a corner of the French territory with masses of German troops

collected on both his flanks, and was much farther from his supports than prudence warranted in face of such an enemy. It can never be known whether the French commander would have extricated his men with less loss than they actually sustained, had he lived to direct them, for he fell by one of the first discharges of artillery. Thus was a step gained by the Germans. They had gallantly stormed the position at Weissenburg and had begun to shatter the enemy in detail. MacMahon and De Failly were now called on to act. The former marched against the Crown Prince with his whole *corps d'armée*, and expected De Failly to support his left in case of a check. Here again was the impetuous over-confidence which Frenchmen are apt to show. The second opportunity of beating them in detail was given to the Germans, and a bloody battle was the result The Prussians and Bavarians together far outnumbered the corps of MacMahon, and before the French Marshal had been long engaged he was sending aide-de-camp after aide-de-camp to beg help from De Failly. The distance was not great to Bitsche, and the message must have arrived in time to bring the needed help, if only everything had been ready. But here again over-confidence had prevailed. One French corps was destroyed before the other came to its support. People who saw it tell with wonder of the rush of MacMahon's beaten army westward, and the advance of angry and almost incredulous troops coming to their aid, towards the front. It was too late to renew the battle, too late to save the fine regiments which lay strewn over the fields at Wörth. The more desperate their resistance, the more had they been slaughtered, and at last there had been a sort of panic. Frenchmen are bad hands at retreating after a defeat. The fugitives from Wörth were in great disorder as they passed through villages

more than ten miles in the rear. The corps of De Failly could only have sacrificed itself uselessly when once MacMahon's soldiers had been demoralized, and to have fought a second battle of Wörth would have been to play into the hands of the Crown Prince, who would like nothing better than to engage the whole French army in detail, and beat them by degrees. We must remember that he is the better general who has the larger force present in the nick of time.

The battle of Wörth was well fought during the early part of the day, both by MacMahon and by the soldiers, but defeat seems to have quite demoralized the troops, who now began to manifest a spirit which has since been frequently displayed in their ranks. On the evening of the 6th they fled from Wörth, as madly as if they had been the rawest levies, although they were feebly pursued, the Crown Prince apparently not being aware of the greatness of the advantage he had won. About 3,000 of them took refuge in Strasburg, where their arrival spread dismay. At Saverne, M. Edmond About met them,—"a long procession of laggards—Cuirassiers without cuirasses, fusiliers without guns, horsemen on foot, and infantry on horseback. A real charge of retreating Cuirassiers, galloping like mad, upset my horse in the ditch and broke the springs of the carriage." The roads in all directions were strewn with arms and knapsacks. The officers had lost their authority, or rather the trial was revealing to them how little they had ever had. The Army of the Empire was betraying defects which had been predicted by military observers, but which not the less, on their manifestation, filled intelligent Frenchmen with astonishment and alarm. But this battle, which the Germans name after the village of Wörth, and the French

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variously, after those of Reichshofen and Fröschweiler, was not the only catastrophe of the day.

The news of the disaster of Weissenburg, reaching Metz on the 5th, induced the Emperor to give orders to General Frossard, commanding the Second Army Corps, to withdraw the troops which had occupied the heights above Saarbruck on the 2nd. There are woods behind Saarbruck as dense as those behind Weissenburg, and on the night of the 5th Frossard's corps lay in the valley which extends from Saarbruck to Forbach. But the caution which removed the Second Corps only a mile or two from the enemy did not induce the Emperor to send up the Third or Fourth Corps to its support. On the morning of the 6th, the leading division of General Steinmetz's army arrived at Saarbruck under General Von Kamecke, and began to reconnoitre. The weakness of this corps induced General Frossard to order the occupation of the heights of Spicheren, from which the French fired on the advancing Germans. These heights, rising in almost perpendicular ascent several hundred feet above the valley, form a natural fortress. The hills project into the valley like so many bastions, affording one of the strongest imaginable positions for defence. The action began in earnest about noon, with the arrival of the Prussian 14th division of General Von Göben's corps: The French occupied the heights of Spicheren with their entire force, and during the action a division from Bazaine's corps came to their support.

The Prussians were greatly outnumbered, but Von Kamecke, knowing that other corps were coming up, did not hesitate to engage the enemy. He attacked in front, and also attempted to turn the left flank of the French by Styring, but was uniformly repulsed. By three o'clock all the troops of his division were under fire, and his enterprise assumed a very serious aspect. But other German troops, attracted by the firing, now arrived.

At first, two batteries from Von Barneckow's division came up at a gallop, followed speedily by the infantry and cavalry. The 5th division, under General Stülpnagel, belonging to Prince Frederick Charles's army, had also heard the firing at Sulzbach, and marched, guided only by the sound of the cannon. With these forces General Von Göben, who had now assumed the command, directed a vigorous attack against the French front, especially against the wooded portion of the declivity. The charge was successful: the wood was occupied. On the southern skirts of the wood the French made a stand, and with infantry, cavalry, and artillery, endeavoured to retrieve the fortunes of the day. But the Prussian infantry were immovable. At this juncture the artillery of the 5th Prussian division rendered good service, and performed a rare feat. Two batteries literally clambered up the hills of Spicheren, by a narrow and precipitous mountain-path, and took part in repulsing the enemy. Frossard then attempted a flank attack against the Prussian left; but in vain. A final charge, the third since the Prussians entered the wood, was now made by the French with great impetuosity; but the Prussians stood firm, and General Frossard, seeing that nothing was to be gained, ordered a retreat. It was a sanguinary action—glorious for the Germans. Fifty-two French battalions, with the artillery of an entire corps, stationed in an almost unassailable position, had been defeated by twenty-seven Prussian battalions, supported by the artillery of one division. Before this action it might have been said that the Prussians had only fought when they had the numerical advantage: the battle of Forbach showed that they had a confidence in their ability to engage superior numbers with success, and that that confidence was justified. The battle of Wörth was fought according to a preconcerted plan: this of Forbach appears not to have been appointed, but to have been the result of

Von Göben's resolution to seize an offered opportunity. Not only did it raise the reputation of the Prussian infantry and artillery—the ground was too difficult for cavalry to take any part in the action—but it disclosed the high tactical capacity of the German commanders, who, in quick and comprehensive insight, and power over all the resources and instrumentalities of a war, showed themselves greatly superior to the men whom the Emperor had placed at the head of his Army Corps.

The retreat of the French from Forbach became a signal rout. Baggage, guns, caissons, camp-equipage, all were abandoned in the flight. A Prussian division had occupied Forbach, and thus forcing General Frossard off the direct road to Metz, compelled him to withdraw to the south-west and leave the road to St. Avold open to the enemy. At the close of the day Steinmetz came up, but neither he nor the subordinate Generals were aware of the real extent of their success, or prepared to follow it up. The road taken by the French in their flight was blocked by numerous waggons with provisions and clothing, and the woods were filled with stragglers, wandering about in a purposeless way. Among the spoils of the day were several railway vans full of confectionery, and ten days afterwards it was easier to obtain a hundredweight of sweetmeats at Forbach than a loaf of ordinary bread. So, after the battle of Wörth, along with the plan of the campaign, a number of ladies' wardrobes had become the prize of the victor.

Between the armies routed at Wörth and Forbach had lain the Fifth Corps, that of De Failly. As we have seen, a division of this corps arrived at Niederbron on the afternoon of the 6th, just in time to cover the retreat of MacMahon's broken battalions upon Saverne. De Failly, however, perceived that the defeats on both sides of him had made his position untenable, and his corps retreating southwards with the greatest precipitation, was lost to view for ten of the

most critical days of the campaign. M. Edmond About described at the time the effect of its sudden appearance at Saverne on Sunday, the day after the battles of Wörth and Forbach:—"A false alarm was raised, the Duc de Magenta had the *générale* beat, and Saverne believed itself lost. The Fifth Corps had arrived, while the officers and soldiers threw themselves on the road to Phalsburg, three-quarters of the inhabitants utterly lost themselves, and rushed into the neighbouring woods. The example—a sad example—was given them by the gendarmes and the sergents de ville. They shut the shops, threw their furniture into the gutters; many of the farmers drove their beasts before them as in the time of Abraham."

CHAPTER III.

MONDAY, August 8th, will long be remembered by this generation. On the morning of that day the public of Europe and America was peremptorily summoned to surrender that belief in the essential military superiority of France which had become almost a part of its mental constitution. The news from Saarbruck and Berlin was surprising — that from Metz was almost stupefying. King William and the Crown Prince boasted of thousands of prisoners taken, and eagles, cannon, mitrailleuses, and camp equipage captured; but these did not half so much impress the public mind as the apologetic and plaintive messages transmitted from Metz to Paris by the Emperor. Napoleon knew better than the enemy the extent of the French disasters, and his despatches, of which he telegraphed no fewer than five on the morning of Sunday, the 7th, were solemn as a knell. The fourth of the series ended,—"The retreat is being effected in good order. All may be regained (*tout peut se rétablir*).—NAPOLEON." In the fifth despatch the Emperor said,—"In order to sustain us here, it is necessary that Paris and France should consent to make great efforts of patriotism. The trial is a serious one." The Council of Ministers at Paris issued a proclamation, in which they said, "The situation is not compromised, but the enemy is on our territory, and a serious effort is necessary." On receipt of the first telegram at

Paris a Ministerial Council was summoned, and the Empress presided over its deliberations at five o'clock in the morning. On the day before, Saturday the 6th—the day of Wörth and Forbach—the Parisians, exasperated at the news of the misfortune at Weissenburg, had been suddenly startled by a false report of a great French victory. MacMahon, it was alleged, had retaken Weissenburg, captured sixty guns, and made 25,000 prisoners. Among the latter, it was said, was the Crown Prince, who, when brought before the Emperor, had shot himself. For an hour and a half the frenzy of joy was uncontrollable. Flags appeared at every window, opera favourites appeared and sang the Marseillaise in the streets. When the falsehood of the rumour became known, the population gave way to excesses. Such was the preparation of the Parisians for a knowledge of the disastrous events which were at that very time taking place on the Sauer and the Saar.

At Metz, the excitement of the heterogeneous multitude which had been collected there, was extreme. A Special Correspondent of the *Daily News*, who arrived there in the midst of it, wrote on the 7th of August:—

I reached Metz this morning at six o'clock from Nancy. On my alighting at the Hotel de l'Europe I immediately perceived that something was going wrong. The scene at the hotel presented a most exciting aspect. The waggons of the États-Majors, which for several days had been filling up the whole courtyard, were being got ready for leaving. The officers were packing up their things in great haste. Some of them seemed very busy giving orders; others were taking breakfast in the table-d'hôte room; others, again, seemed ready for starting, and were discussing with great passion the issue of late events. Though I was about the only bourgeoise there,

and saw that the officers looked at me in a very suspicious sort of way, I did not stir from my place. I had not been sitting down an hour at the café before the hotel when up came a veterinary officer whom I had known not long ago, and who I knew to belong to General Ladmirault's corps. The news he gave me was sufficient to justify the terror and panic one read in everybody's face. A fierce battle had been going on ever since Thursday. The rest of the army was completely *en route*, and notwithstanding the valour shown by the troops, it seemed impossible to arrest the progress of the Prussians. The 76th and 77th Regiments of the Line had kept for four hours their position against something like fifty thousand men. One regiment of Chasseurs and another of Cuirassiers had been completely destroyed. One battalion of the 40th, a thousand strong, had retired with 105 men. Of the three other battalions, it was with the greatest difficulty that two could be formed with only one officer per company. As to the feeling in the whole army against General MacMahon and the leading officers, it is something tremendous. What was your plan? they keep asking. Why weaken our forces by occupying such a long line when the enemy was only a few miles distant, and it would be impossible for us to concentrate at a given point when the enemy might be upon us at every moment? Why march against Saarbruck when the whole army was not yet in a position to engage in separate battles? Not half of the African corps had arrived. Thousands of men had not yet joined their regiments, and as to speaking of the commissariat department, it has proved truly inefficient. It is not a question of time—it is a question of military organization. The Prussian system is so easy and so simple

that an army, however numerous it may be, is sure to meet with no such inconveniences as have been experienced on this occasion by the French. What moral influence can a general such as MacMahon have in his army when the men, even the most uninstructed, see with their own eyes the mismanagement of the whole undertaking? What can men think of their generals, and with what heart can they combat to invade a hostile country, when food and straw and hay, and all that is requisite for an army, is wanting them in their own country?

How is it possible that the general officers immediately under the commanders of this miserable war can execute with zeal and with punctuality the orders they receive, when a general like MacMahon is heard to say, after having fought for so many hours, that he must stop because they have no more ammunition? The fact is that the morale of the whole army has greatly suffered. When on the field of battle, soldiers will never lament much at seeing a regiment returning from the fight reduced to a half or a quarter of its number, as long as they are assured that some good has come out of it. But when they perceive that valour and *élan* are useless before an enemy who only acts according to strict strategy, they lose their spirits. The people at Metz are in a most excited state of mind. They have not one man in the town, and the Prussians are reported to have occupied St. Avold, which is only about fifteen miles from here. The Prussians have now the line to Forbach, and have taken possession of it. Some friends of mine were at the railway station all night yesterday, waiting to see the arrival of the wounded, but not one appeared. Where are they? In whose hands? Some of the officers who have made their way back here, say they lost all their baggage.

Just as I was writing I heard a great row going on in the courtyard. I went down and saw that the guards at the gate had been ordered off. The servants were putting the officers' baggage in the waggons, and they all seemed to be in a great hurry. I am told that the Emperor intends removing his head-quarters, perhaps to Nancy, as the Prussians appear to be directing themselves towards that town. . . . Great excitement prevails. The Emperor's carriage and horses are being brought to the railway station.

On the evening of the same day, the same Correspondent wrote:—

Newspaper correspondents seem to be feared more than the Prussians themselves. I closed my letter this morning saying that I intended going to the railway station, and perhaps seeing the Emperor off. As I left the hotel I met Mr. Simpson, of the *Illustrated London News*, and Mr. Mayhew and his son (of the *Globe*), who, like myself, were going to the railway station. As we walked along and saw the Emperor's carriages and baggage being put on waggons, we began talking about the war and the latest news that had arrived. Mr. Simpson said he thought the scene before us so picturesque that he would take a sketch of it. Accordingly he drew out of his pocket his note-book, and began sketching one of the Emperor's carriages. We saw a lot of soldiers surrounding us, but took no notice of them. A few minutes afterwards, an artillery officer in white trousers and blue jacket came up to us, and looking very hard, said:—"One of these gentlemen was sketching something. May I see what it was?" Mr. Simpson took out of his pocket the book, and showed it to him. The officer examined it, he looked round, and in a moment we found ourselves in the midst of some fifty artillerymen. "À la

place," cried the officer, upon which the soldiers got hold of us, and informed us that we were their prisoners. "What for?" asked I. "Ah! le villain espion Prussien vous verrez," was the satisfactory answer I got. The officer was leading the way, and to have seen him walking so proudly before us, one would have thought that, instead of having got hold of us, he had taken one of the enemy's batteries. On our entering the town, a great crowd began to assemble. People came running from every side street, and the crowd swelled to such an extent that before we reached the Cathedral Square it had grown to something like three thousand persons. It was with the greatest difficulty the soldiers could defend us from being torn to pieces. "Tue les," cried every one; "L'espion, l'espion; justice, justice!" I am sure that if we had had to walk another five minutes, not one of us would have been saved. However, thank God, we reached the *place*, and were thrown, all safe, into the guard-room—a room measuring ten square feet. The officer who was in charge of the place ordered a picket of men to be placed before the door to prevent the crowd breaking in, but all the precautions taken did not prevent two or three men in blouses rushing in and insulting us most grossly. There was no help for it; we were spies, and deserved to be punished accordingly. We waited for a short time, and then in came a colonel with several other officers. Not one of them addressed us in French, but in German, and our not answering in German was sufficient to prove that we were Prussians, and pretended not to be so. We answered all the questions addressed to us, showed our passports, but nothing seemed to satisfy them. Mr. Simpson's note-book was evidently a most aggravating circumstance. The carriage was not a carriage; it was a plan of the fortress of Metz. We waited very patiently for an hour or so, asked the men

on guard if they would allow us to send a note to General St. Sauveur; but they would allow nothing of the kind. The door was flung open, and in came a gentleman with a red ribbon on his coat, and looking as white as a ghost. One would have said he had gone mad by the way he went on. He told the officer who had questioned us not to leave us on any account, as he had sufficient proofs in his hands to prove that we were a set of spies. "That gentleman there," said he, pointing at Mr. Mayhew, "came the other day to my office and bought three copies of the *Journal de la Moselle* (the speaker being the editor of that paper). Now, who on earth but a spy would come to a newspaper office and buy three—do you hear me, three copies of one paper?" The readers of the *Daily News* will of themselves understand that it was very difficult for us to know what to say in our defence when our passports and papers were not of the slightest use, and the fact that one of us had bought three copies of one journal was a sufficient reason to shoot us for being spies. After many explanations we induced one of the officers to take a note to General St. Sauveur, explaining to him the mess we had got into, and asking him to say a word in our favour. We waited some time, and then the officer came back with an order from the general to liberate the English journalists. The editor of *Le Journal de la Moselle* began to apologize for his conduct towards us, saying that he had acted thus because the state of his country required every citizen to do his duty. As the crowd had been increasing before the house, and nobody could have persuaded them that we were not spies, the officer suggested we should remain locked up till late. However, after one hour had elapsed, and the people seemed to be more calm, we thought we might as well take the chance and go to the hotel. The editor and two other gentlemen

left the guard-house with us, and proceeded to leave the place. But on our appearing in the street the people began shouting as loud as ever, and pushing the soldiers in order to get hold of us. I heard the editor shouting, "They are friends! They are friends!" but I don't know, I am sure, what happened after. I found myself again in the guard-room, together with Mr. Mayhew and his son, Mr. Simpson having escaped all safe. We were talking amongst ourselves, of course in English, when a man in a blouse, and who, I know not why, had never left the place, went up to the officer commanding, and said that he had been listening to our conversation, and that we had been speaking German all the time. This mysterious man, who was allowed to say anything he thought proper, and who never left us for a moment, notwithstanding that he was repeatedly ordered to do so by the general, was looking at us in a most ferocious way. On our asking whether there was another door by which we could have gone off without waiting there so long, we were informed that we could not go until General Coffiniere, the general commanding in Metz, had seen us, and had given a special order. I must confess we were beginning to get a little tired of it. General Coffiniere, a tall, fine man, with white moustaches, finally arrived. The same story of questioning and cross-questioning began all over again. The Commissaire de Police, with another man, was introduced in order to examine the validity of our passports. On my showing the one I possessed, and which had been given me by Sir Augustus Paget only ten days before, on my leaving Florence, the Commissaire took it up, made a roll of it, and said it was a false one, and even if it were a good one it was worth nothing, for it did not prove that it was my own. The general sat himself on the small table, and knocking his stick on the wooden pavement, asked what

had become of the sketching gentleman and his note-book. When he was told that Mr. Simpson had gone off, he went into a desperate passion, and blew the colonel up, saying that no orders, not even those of the Emperor himself, were to have been executed without his knowing of them; that he was responsible for the safety of Metz. He then looked at us in the face, and, addressing the officers, police agents, and men in blouses who surrounded him, said, "Gentlemen, you know that Metz is in a state of siege, and therefore no longer under the common law. We have been too humane, too noble-hearted, too generous. Whilst the Prussians have committed the most horrible crimes against inoffensive Frenchmen and other officers, we have suffered the enemy to abuse our generosity, and this is the gratitude we receive. But it must stop once for ever. It is a hard thing, but the law gives me the right to shoot any one I choose in the market square; and an example must be given, or we shall never have peace." "Bravo, General! bravo, Commander!" cried all of them in a chorus. The man in a blouse left the room, and in a second the whole square echoed with cries of "Bravo, le Général!" "Mort aux espions!" As I felt pretty safe that M. le Général would think twice before making his experiment on an English subject, I said frankly, that what he had been saying was all nonsense, and that when we might prove who we were, and why we were in Metz, it was an absurd thing insisting any longer. "But your papers?" said the General; "have you nothing else but your passport?" I told him that my letters of introduction to the head-quarters had from some mysterious cause never reached me, and could only show some telegrams I had received, and the sight of which was sufficient to clear up everything. "Well," said the General, "I ought to ask you to give a satisfactory

account of yourself within three hours; I shall give you four-and-twenty hours; but I must tell you one thing —if you succeed in getting off, you must leave this immediately, for we won't stand it to have people here amongst us who keep writing against France, and favouring the cause of Prussia. You say you are the correspondent of the *Daily News*, eh?"—"Yes, sir."—"All right. Good day, gentlemen," and off he went.

We had led the way, and now every moment a new spy was got hold of. One of them, the correspondent of the *Journal Illustrée*, was in a very bad state indeed. His coat had been torn to pieces, and they had attempted to strangle him. The poor man was walking the street very peacefully, carrying a little dog with him, when a lot of people dashed upon him, and would have murdered him had it not been for several officers who did their best to save him. He cared little for himself, but he was in a most awful way about his dog, and offered any sum of money if they would bring it back to him. It was the most ludicrous thing in the world to hear the officers questioning him, and his answering only, "Oh! mon petit chien, mon petit chien!"

Another hour passed, when two officers of the Staff walked into the room and informed us that we were at liberty to go when we liked. One of them, the Vicomte de Valcourt, who spoke English very well, expressed his most sincere displeasure at what had taken place, and hoped we would understand that it was not owing to any bad feeling towards anybody, but only as a measure of precaution. The officer gave the necessary instructions to the sergeant who had charge of us that we might be let free, and left us on the most amicable terms. It was getting near six, and we decided on going. To our great surprise the man in the blouse stopped us, and said that we were not free to go, and could not leave until

written orders had been given to the colonel. We were quite tired of it: we had been there nearly six hours, and certainly the place was anything but comfortable. But there was no help for it. Another half-hour elapsed, when at last a major of the Staff came and took us to our hotel, leaving the people, who could make nothing of it, very much disappointed. We are all off to-night for Nancy.

One of the first measures which showed the world that the German commander-in-chief believed he had troops enough to pursue the Imperial army, and to spare, was the detachment of a Badish corps to lay siege to the great fortress of Strasburg. When, in the third week of August, General Uhrich, the commandant of Strasburg, was summoned to surrender, few persons believed that General Moltke really intended to detach an army for an enterprise so serious as the reduction of a first-class fortress. About 9,000 Mobile Guards, a regiment of the line, and some sedentary National Guards, formed the garrison of the place on the 6th of August. On the evening of that day, however, several thousand fugitives from MacMahon's army fled thither, throwing the inhabitants into a complete panic. Thousands of the inhabitants left, rather than expose themselves to the horrors of a siege, but the vast majority remained to strengthen the hands of General Uhrich, and protract an obstinate resistance.

The Crown Prince of Prussia, with the bulk of his Third Army, pursued his way towards Champagne, through the Vosges, by Ober-Modern, as soon as he had repaired his losses at Wörth. The Special Correspondent of the *Daily News* with the Crown Prince wrote, on the 11th of August:—

There has been a shifting of quarters from village to village since I last wrote; indeed, the army of the Crown Prince is so active that this shifting of quarters is an

almost daily occurrence. Everything is done in perfect order. The carriages are told off in a slow moving column, with mounted troopers at intervals to regulate the line of march, and when all are placed there is a halt of a few minutes to allow the Prince and his Staff to pass. Well may the villagers stare at the show, for they are not likely to see again so many fine horses and bright uniforms. Old and young crowd the wayside as His Highness goes by, and doff their caps respectfully, but without any sign of welcome. It is curious to see these German Frenchmen, or rather these Gallicized Germans, dealing with the invaders. The power of understanding one another makes their intercourse much less disagreeable than might be supposed. Yet, nevertheless, there is a strong sympathy with France among the Alsatian peasants, because they have, thanks to the conscription, such a number of their sons serving in the French Army. I notice that the younger folks can all speak a little French, though they answer the question of the soldiers, "Parlez vous Chassepôt?" with a sententious "Nein," which seems to imply utter ignorance of the language referred to. Poor souls! they are very much frightened by this astounding invasion, and make the most of their rough Alsatian dialect, as a means of propitiating the new and dreaded invaders of the Empire. I must say, in justice to the German troops, that this dread of the invaders is founded on a notion of what might be, rather than on what really happens. Beyond compulsory service in country waggons to carry wounded men, or loads of hay, and compulsory sales of provisions to the military authorities, there is little to complain of. It is as with Wellington's Army in Southern France in 1814, rather than as with the Allied Armies in that memorable year. No invasion can be pleasant to the conquered people, but this one of 1870 is conducted on the humane

principles of modern warfare. The Crown Prince of Prussia has resolved to strike only at the French Government, and at the armed forces which oppose him, and to spare as far as possible the unfortunate people who inhabit the scene of hostilities.

And so this strange surprise to Europe, this invasion of France within three weeks of the declaration of war, goes steadily forward with all imaginable precaution. Railway lines are reopened, telegraph lines are laid down, and a swarm of German troops pours over the frontier. How strong the invading force will be in three days' time it is better not to say. But Napoleon runs great risk of finding himself on a field of Leipsic when he makes his final stand. There has never been such a concentration of troops in the world's history as this of the German armies in 1870. I spoke more than once of their tremendous efforts to send forward soldiers from Berlin, and even from the farthest extremity of Eastern Prussia. I was in St. Petersburg when war was declared, and as I travelled westward could see but one great mustering of soldiers and Landwehr men from Königsberg to the Rhine. In Berlin and in Saxony, in Bavaria, Würtemberg, and Baden, the country was all alive with armed men. The railway officials worked like galley slaves, the telegraph was never idle, and in a fortnight all was safe. Then the chances began to favour Germany. More and more troops were ready with each succeeding day. Bavarians were as ready as Prussians, South Germany as ready as the Northern Confederation, and France, which had sought the contest, was completely outstripped. It was almost as though some young blood in a public garden should fix a quarrel on a quiet-looking professional pugilist, and get a tremendous thrashing for his pains. France entered gaily and fiercely into the struggle, with

splendid soldiers, but with no thorough preparation. She was avowedly the weaker of the two in point of mere numbers. I know that a good many people at home, who delight in sweeping analogies, will be talking about Celtic weakness and Gothic strength, or something of that kind. But the brave Prussian army and its Southern comrades of Wörth and Weissenburg deserve more credit than that of being Goths. They have beaten an antagonist who was worthy of them. Marshal MacMahon was no mean commander, and his troops behaved like men. When I saw the field of Wörth, the heaps of bodies, and the long trains of wounded prisoners, I felt that France had no cause to blush for that disastrous day. The Zouaves lay thickly where they had stood, and the brigade of Cuirassiers was almost annihilated. It needed no theories about this or that race to explain the scene. The French commander had been out-generalled by the Crown Prince of Prussia, insomuch that His Highness had brought a large number of Germans to bear on a small number of Frenchmen, and the French had been overpowered by the cool, determined Germans, who had taken trouble to master their breech-loading tactics. What can we think of an organization which is rash enough to send Cuirassiers against an infantry that has the needle-gun? Yet this last act of madness was performed by the French. We can boast of doing more mischief at Balaclava; but this charge of steel-clad horsemen into a vineyard full of infantry was a wild act of self-destruction. I hear that the Cuirassiers were nearly all killed or taken, and certainly the number of dead horses and men, of breastplates and brass helmets scattered about, look like a fearful loss on their part. The fact is that the French committed two signal blunders—they underrated their enemy, and trusted to worn-out tactics against modern improvements. That

day of Wörth was glorious for Germany because it was a triumph of patient preparation, as much as for the high courage shown by the German troops.

From their first massing of forces near Weissenburg, and surprise of that position, to the present moment, when they are well advanced into French territory, the German armies have been the better prepared. They came on from Weissenburg to Wörth with a superior force, broke up the corps of MacMahon in a single battle, and have pushed steadily forward against the right flank of the French line. We do not know exactly how far Napoleon's subjects may be rallying to his support, but in these days of drenching rain we are consoled by feeling that his Imperial Majesty's plans of invasion must be now exchanged for a very cautious system of defence.

On the 12th of August the same Correspondent wrote:—

The movement of troops is incessant, though no one is told whither they are going; and with each advance the Prussians bring forward their *Feld-Post* and their military telegraph. A more perfect system of organization it is difficult to imagine. The columns of provisions creep like great serpents over the country; the active detachments of telegraph men push on with their light poles set up at intervals, and their slowly decreasing coil of wire; and the field post-office brings letters to the different divisions. From side to side for many a mile the whole country is on the move. Now a regiment of cavalry goes by, with infinite jingling of harness and clattering of hoofs. Now the bayonets of the infantry shine out among the trees, or there is an interminable train of guns dragged past. I fancy that the villagers are simply astounded at what they see, and think that all Germany is upon them. "All of us here?" The soldiers laugh, and tell of the other two

great armies which are invading France. There is much less of the fierce assertion of nationality among the Germans since they have won, and much less talk of going to Paris, now that going there is quite on the cards. Everybody is in high spirits, which exhaustion of drinkables and torrents of rain cannot diminish. The Fatherland is quite safe; the war has scarcely troubled a single German village—not one in this part of the line—and, rain as it may, the men are thoroughly cheerful. They will be, as our lads express it, "bad to beat in their next engagement."

France is not properly fortified for a war with united Germany. These little places, which hold a few hundred men, and did well enough in old times, are useless against modern artillery. There is, for instance, an ancient fortress among wood-covered hills—a quaint, picturesque stronghold of Alsace called La Petite Pierre. Once upon a time it was much esteemed as a check to an invader coming through the Vosges. But now it is abandoned without firing a shot. The black and white colours of Prussia wave over the citadel, and a quantity of military stores have been captured therein. I made a long excursion a few days ago in that direction, and am allowed to describe the fortress all the more readily that the French are supposed to know everything about it. There is an inner and an outer fort, with an unfinished curtain connecting them, and with new palisades erected to defend the approaches. The foundation rests on a solid rock, which is very steep to the westward, and an old drawbridge cuts off all communication with the outer works. It is a place that ought not to be defended unless the inhabitants were first expelled, for every house would be down in six hours when once the cannonade began. I doubt whether it could be held at all if really heavy guns were brought into play. But it was

not ready for defence when the Prussians came. The outer and more important work was unfinished. Therefore La Petite Pierre was abandoned, to the great relief of its inhabitants, who had feared destruction, and the Prussians quietly marched in. Now if a strong fort, say an ironclad tower, had been upon this hill of which I speak, the Crown Prince must have sent heavy guns against it. I do not say that any mere fort by a roadside would hinder the German invasion, but this little fortress of La Petite Pierre, among its wood-covered hills, illustrates two points of the Frenchmen's unreadiness for this strange upsetting of all their plans—first, the fort was old-fashioned and insufficient; secondly, it was not equipped for defence.

On the 14th the same Correspondent wrote, on the march through Lorraine :—

The brilliant Staff comes out of the village in the midst of wondering rustics, and the long train of head-quarters' carriages and waggons follow steadily behind. We cannot realize our being conquered by anybody; so it is better to fancy ourselves the conquerors, and to trot forth in the early morning with light hearts on the track of our victorious army. Do not imagine that we are the first to lead the way. That might do all very well in times of Knights-errant and Crusaders, when the "trusty glaive" was always at hand. But in times of needle-guns and organized warfare the head-quarters comes behind a mass of the cavalry and infantry which makes it quite secure. It is only in great battles or sudden movements of some sort that the Staff would come very near the enemy. On ordinary marches they are in the rear of a large force. I think that the French know this, so I have not a shadow of doubt about telling it. There are the Light Cavalry, the Dragoons, and

Lancers scattered over the country in our front. Then come bodies of infantry, supported by guns, and at a good distance from the front comes the head-quarters itself, with its field telegraph and post-office—a perfect centre of military civilization. The peasants are very curious to see the great people of the army ride forth, and gather by hundreds at the wayside. We have fancied ourselves following this gay troop of horsemen, for which all make way. Let us pass on through the village and look round us as we come into the open country. Those men under the trees yonder are Lancers watching the field telegraph. That dark mass of horses and waggons creeping along the road is a column of ammunition moving towards the front. There are the suttlers' carts following the army resolutely wherever it may go, and there are the peasants, pressed into the service with their cattle, bringing loads of hay for the cavalry horses. It is not quite what we should wish for ourselves—the being pressed into a service, even for the pay which the men will get. But such is war, and they may think themselves lucky to be no worse off. They are not afraid of their invaders—at least, not very much afraid—as we see by those peasant girls who stand chatting with the drivers of the artillery waggons. Nevertheless, we would rather not be invaded ourselves, and we will take the point of view of mere abstractions, of shadows gliding along the road. Forward from village to village; forward from one column to another; we glide to the front and find the Lancer outposts approaching the enemy with care. They look sharply about them. It is no joking matter to be shot through the head; and behind that clump of trees, just in front of them, they have a glimpse of French uniforms. Very cautiously they advance. Now we see the Frenchmen slowly winding their way up an opposite hill, and in ten minutes

more the Lancers are in the village below. They want food, they want forage for their horses; they ask eagerly after liquor of any sort. But when we think of old world wars, this first arrival of the invaders seems a mild affair. The Staff need not be ashamed to ride to the front, for they will discover little more than small annexations of food and drink to charge against their advanced guard. It is a war in which there is no wish to deal harshly with the country people, who are known to have about as much to do with beginning it as the Lord Mayor of London.

The Staff of the Crown Prince of Prussia is made more brilliant by the presence of several other German Princes who are serving under his orders. There is the candidate for the Spanish throne, Prince Leopold, of Hohenzollern, riding beside his kinsman to assert the right of Germans not to be bullied because Spaniards chose to manage their own affairs. There is the Duke of Saxe-Coburg Gotha, brother to our lamented Prince Consort, whose little principality is German and patriotic to the core. There is the young Prince of Mecklenburg, son of our Princess of Cambridge, and said to be very English in tastes and education, but with a warm heart for the cause of the great German Fatherland. These and other men of high position in Germany follow the Crown Prince of Prussia as he rides forth from halting-place to halting-place, always farther on French soil. You should stand at a corner of the village and see the Staff go by. I have mentioned in another letter that the peasants do not cheer. It would be absurd if they did, for their sons are serving in the French army, though they are of German stock. The peasants do not cheer, but have a good long stare, hat in hand. I will not describe the procession as it passes, because this would be scarcely what those who ride in it would wish. My

object is that you should understand the sort of war which is being waged, should see before you the French high roads with their lines of poplars, the crowded encampments and the advancing columns. I want you to picture the outposts far on in front, looking into every bush, and the Staff in its proper place, as a centre of management and direction. I would fain bring before you this strange, perplexing, unexpected sight which it is my lot to see—the challenger knocked down at the first encounter, the *grande nation* invaded with such deadly speed. We all thought that Prussia had a good chance, and I myself was inclined to back her heavily, as my letters have shown; but this sudden success takes away one's breath. You must realize the scene to measure its overwhelming effect—French *hotels de ville* occupied by helmeted Prussians, French peasants in blouses doing forced service to the Prussian commissariat. These things form part of the picture. You see the whole country alive with invaders, and the columns of infantry pressing forward like trains of working ants. Here are the men who make the conquest sure. These infantry soldiers are a special product of modern German training. They are the experts of the breech-loader. A long and careful training has made them steady in action and quick in their manœuvres. How they march, too! It is only this morning that our head-quarters' escort performed another of those feats of rapid marching which have been our wonder of late. The poor dusty fellows kept up with horses and carriages for twelve or fifteen miles at a swinging pace, and in full campaign order. They must sometimes have been almost running, yet only two or three men fell out. Whatever may be the smartness of French marching—and it is admirable, I confess—it could not well beat this.

CHAPTER IV.

THE situation of the French army after the defeats of Wörth and Forbach was not desperate; but only a decisive resolution could save it. The power of initiating offensive movements had passed into the hands of the enemy, but that of concentration and retreat still remained: yet only as a precarious possession. In a few days the great French army might wish in vain for the last privilege of retreat. The remnant of MacMahon's army was beyond the Emperor's reach; it must make its own way in its own time to a position far in the rear of Metz, there to rejoin De Failly's, which had not fought at all, but had undertaken a long march, prescribed solely by regard for its own safety, and was somewhere near Neufchateau, making by the Haute Marne for the camp at Châlons. Several Army Corps were, however, still intact, and to draw them together was the first care of the Emperor. Ladmirault, with the 4th Corps, fell back from Thionville to Metz; the Imperial Guard, under Bourbaki, and the 3rd Corps, under Bazaine, were encamped under the walls of that fortress. Frossard had retreated to the same stronghold to seek shelter for the shattered 2nd Corps, to which also a portion of Canrobert's 6th Corps had been brought up. Bazaine was ordered to occupy the line of the Nied, in front of Metz, to endeavour to rally the forces before him: otherwise the concentration described was effected at Metz. The German commander was quick to perceive his opportunity, and his

movements were marked with the utmost vigour and decision. While the Crown Prince of Prussia was wending his way in the track of MacMahon, the great armies of Prince Frederick Charles and General Steinmetz, numbering probably a quarter of a million men, with 750 guns, were moving upon Metz, and threatening to shut the Emperor, his generals, and his army in. The only safety of the French army lay in instant retreat. Its leaders knew the fact, but the Emperor was commander-in-chief, and political considerations overbore the dictates of sound military policy. In the memorial which the Emperor indited at Wilhelmshöhe, and which has been published by an officer of his Staff, we have an account of the causes of an irresolution whose fatal effects were soon to become so apparent. We are told that the Emperor, "profoundly depressed at witnessing all his communications destroyed," and driven in these few days to think no longer of any but a defensive position, resolved immediately to lead back the army to the Camp of Châlons, where it might have gathered together the *débris* of Marshal MacMahon's army, Failly's corps, and that of Douay. This plan, when communicated to Paris, was at first approved by the Council of Ministers; but, two days afterwards, a letter from M. E. Ollivier informed the Emperor that, upon mature consideration, the Council had decided that it had been too hasty in approving the retreat of the army upon Châlons, since "the abandonment of Lorraine could only produce a deplorable effect on the public mind;" on this ground he advised the Emperor to renounce his project, and Napoleon yielded to his counsel.

It then became necessary to consider what use should be made of this portion of the "Army of the Rhine," now become itself the "Army of Metz." By the arrival of Canrobert with the reserves, it had now, the Emperor tells us, been raised to a strength of 140,000 men, and it re-

ceived orders for its concentration around Metz, "in the hope that it might be able to fall upon one of the Prussian armies before they had effected their junction." No expectation could have been more preposterous and absurd; but then the excuse follows, that the action of the French was uniformly embarrassed "by the absolute ignorance in which we always remained concerning the position and the strength of the hostile armies. So well did the Prussians conceal their movements behind the formidable shelter of cavalry, which they deployed before them in all directions, that, notwithstanding the most persevering inquiries, it was never really known where the mass of their troops was, nor, in consequence, to what points the chief efforts of our army should be directed." Thus the precious week which followed the disastrous 6th of August was allowed to expire. The French could not act, for they knew neither the enemy's position nor his plan; they could not retreat, for the Ministers knew that Paris would not receive back a defeated Emperor. Thus the army stood motionless while the enemy prepared its ruin.

By the 13th General Steinmetz, with the First Army, had approached Metz on the northern side. Prince Frederick Charles had placed a portion of his army within a few miles of the fortress on the east, and with the rest was actually crossing the Moselle at Pont-à-Mousson, preparing to cut off the French army if it should move, or to invest it if it should stay in its place. The Emperor seems to have had no suspicion of the actual occurrence of that movement. But there were Generals who had represented to him the possibility that the army might be cut off from Paris, and so the State be deprived of its Head. He himself, too, felt that he "was being made responsible for the wretched situation of the army," so he resolved to resign the chief command into the hands of Marshal Bazaine, and proceed to the camp at Châlons. The retreat which M.

Emile Ollivier and his colleagues had countermanded, was now ordered by the Marshal on his own responsibility. But three or four precious days had been lost, and these had sufficed to enable a General who, like Count Moltke, always knew what he wanted, and how to obtain it, to secure his hold upon the Army of Metz.

It was on Sunday, the 14th of August, that the vanguard of the French began crossing the Moselle, on the road to Verdun; but its movements were sluggish and embarrassed. Three Army Corps—those of Bazaine (now commanded by General Decaen), of Ladmirault, and of Frossard—remained on the east of Metz, as if certain of being able to retire whenever they liked in safety. Prince Frederick Charles, however, had not, in the judgment of Count Moltke, had sufficient start in his flanking march to make it prudent to permit these corps to follow him, as they began to show signs of doing. With a view, therefore, of occupying them, of covering the march of troops crossing at Pont-à-Mousson, and of delaying the general retreating movement of the enemy, the German commander-in-chief ordered General Steinmetz to make an attack on those French corps lying east of Metz. The engagement became the first of a brief series of the most sanguinary battles of this war. The French held several villages, where they had entrenched themselves, and occupied numerous lines of rifle pits, inflicting great loss on the enemy. That they suffered much in turn is shown by the fact that in one of their rifle pits no fewer than 781 dead were found. In the end, the French retired to the shelter of the fortress. Some of the aspects of the battle were thus described by a Correspondent of the *Daily News*, who was shut up in Metz, in a letter dated August 15:—

Yesterday we thought all chance of sending letters gone,

for we got nothing even from Paris. But this morning I hear a post will start for the capital, and I take my chance of your getting what I am able to tell from the inside of a town which is surrounded by armies—whether French or Prussian does not much matter so far as news is concerned. At eleven o'clock yesterday Bazaine effected a reconnaissance with one division. At two, a battle commenced on the right, at Borny. Till four it was of no great importance, but then the 4th Army Corps, forming the first line of battle, accomplished a manœuvre intended to deceive the Prussians into the belief that it was retreating. This was at a quarter past four. The Prussians rushed forward, and attacked with surprising vigour. Then the 4th Corps, whose retreat to the left was a mere feint, fell at once on the enemy's flank, while Canrobert, on the right, attacked simultaneously. The Prussian attack meantime had been developed in great force on the French centre. The movements on both sides were effected with singular precision, and the whole spectacle was like a review at Châlons. The Prussians advanced in close column against the French line, which their artillery, splendidly served as it was, had vainly attempted to shake. The French officers consider that the Prussian infantry is relatively inferior to their artillery. The needle-gun is heavy, and appears to incommode them greatly when climbing a height or moving rapidly over broken ground. The soldiers themselves are active. They fire lying flat on the ground, seeking cover from every irregularity, but do not put their knapsacks, as the French do, to make little ramparts in front of them, and rests for their guns. The Prussians fired with great deliberation, while the French rattled away as fast as they could discharge their Chassepôts. The regiments most closely engaged were the 69th, 90th, 44th, 60th, 80th, 33rd, 54th, 65th,

and 85th of the Line, the 11th and 15th Foot Chasseurs, and the 8th, 9th, and 10th Batteries of the 1st Regiment of Artillery. Those which suffered most were the 44th and 90th Line, and 15th Foot Chasseurs. The 44th especially was terribly shattered, while the 85th, though in the thickest of the action, lost but thirty-five men killed and wounded. The colonel of the 44th was killed. The colonel of the 3rd Horse Chasseurs, and Generals Duplessis and Castamar were wounded. The above details are mostly gathered from officers coming into town after the fight was over. At the beginning I followed a troop of Hussars as far as permitted, and what I saw of the fight was from a hillock, close by the walls. A Staff officer came to summon the Hussar regiment, with some officers of which I was seated in a café. In five minutes they were off, and halted at first on the hillock above mentioned. On a sudden signal they went tearing away to the front, and in a moment more the artillery on both sides had covered the valley of the river, and the whole works in front and the ground beyond, with a thick cloud of smoke. There was nothing to do but return to town. By half-past eight in the evening a bulletin was placarded in the streets, saying:—"Firing is nearly over. The Prussian lines extended three leagues. Ground gained in every direction." It does not say by whom ground was gained. Officers who came back later from the field maintained that victory rested with the French, that the Prussians had been out-generalled and lost heavily, while the French were comparatively little exposed. But a Prussian officer who had been taken prisoner, and who came into my café on parole with a French officer, told a different story. Said he, "You had better surrender at discretion. We are more than 200,000 strong. You will be crushed. As to the battle, you had your own way at first, for

we believed we had only a division in front of us, but you know what the end was." It is difficult to question even officers closely, so keen are still the suspicions about spies; and to ask whether the French army had suffered a defeat would be to expose myself to instant expulsion, or worse. Hence I can give you only such particulars as are collected in the ways I have mentioned. I do not know why the advanced columns have returned again under the walls of the fortress.

This morning, Monday, there were reports of heavy artillery towards Thionville, but all is again quiet. We only know that Sunday's conflict was not decisive, and that another battle is imminent. The troops are never at rest, manœuvres in one direction or another are going on constantly. Orders have this moment been issued that no civilian shall leave the city on any pretext. Two shots from Fort St. Quentin have just demolished the head of the Thionville Railway bridge at Metz Station. I am told it was done to cut off a detachment of 500 Prussians encamped at Montigny, who attempted to cross the Moselle, and were seen from the fort. At seven this morning two Prussian cuirassiers entered that town. They were followed by four others. Breakfast was served to the six, and paid for; they promenaded the town till eight, and withdrew not only unmolested by anybody, but carrying off two prisoners—a St. Cyr pupil and an orderly. All this, at a mile and a half from Metz, will give you some notion of the dash and boldness of the Prussian cavalry. Last night we thought we heard the Prussians shouting victory, notwithstanding the defeat we believe they suffered. But it seems some of their regiments sing hymns nightly, with accompaniments from their military bands, a custom they have preserved from the battle of Leuthen, where they advanced to the charge singing Luther's Hymn. They

end with hurrahs. We heard them distinctly. The Emperor and his Staff, Prince Imperial and all, are at Longeville. As I write, there passes a closed carriage escorted by a picket of Hussars in command of a captain of the Staff. It contains a Prussian envoy, re-conducted to his own lines. French officers say he brought a request for an armistice, and admitted that Prussian losses were considerable. But he did not tell his errand to them nor to me.

This battle, which was at first known as that of Pange, was designated by the King of Prussia by the name of the village of Courcelles, near which it took place, and which after the investment of Metz became the scene of more than one sanguinary struggle. Each side claimed the victory: probably the Germans suffered the greater loss in killed and wounded, but they achieved their end; they gained time for Prince Frederick Charles's advance, and they delayed the French retreat. The *Officiál Journal* of Paris, while reporting the battle as a rupulse of the Prussians, announced that the completion of the works of the fortifications of Paris would be pushed forward with all possible speed. From that time, also, the Berlin journals began to discuss the conditions under which Metz might be besieged and taken.

The 15th of August had been for many years a French holiday, but now no one had time to remember the Fête Napoléon. Marshal Bazaine employed it in moving the remainder of his army out of Metz, which was now left to its garrison, under General Coffinières. The heaviness of Bazaine's movements at a crisis when his army was to be saved, if at all, by its legs, has been universally censured. He must by this time have been aware that his enemy was following or attending him in force, and that he had to guard at least against an attack on his flank or rear.

Nevertheless, his movements were so slow, that night found him not more than a dozen miles on his way. Two roads lead from Metz to Verdun; the one more direct, by Vionville, the other to the north of it, by Doncourt and Etain. They diverge at Gravelotte, about four miles from Metz. Along that road Bazaine was advancing on the 15th, without serious molestations, but not without many indications of the presence of the enemy. By nightfall he appears to have been satisfied with his achievement, for he sent word to Paris that by the next day he should be at Etain with all his army. Count Moltke had occupied the same day in placing eight Army Corps on a line curving up from Pont-a-Mousson, in a north-westerly direction to the roads by which the Marshal was retreating. The next day (August 16th), the head of the French column, which was moving on the southern road to Verdun, was violently attacked by the 3rd Prussian Corps. The assault fell upon Frossard's troops, who had been defeated so disastrously at Forbach (or Spicheren), and the corps wavered and blocked up the road. The first blow had been struck by the Prussian Cavalry, but it was soon followed by the Infantry of the 3rd, which, as one French corps after another came up, was supported by divisions of the nearest German corps, until the battle raged along the whole line from Mars le Tours to Rezonville. At first the German line looked northwards, but as the corps successively took ground to the left, they at length formed a line looking eastward, the left extremity of which reached to the northern of Bazaine's two lines of retreat—that by the road to Etain. The French fought this battle with superior numbers, and Bazaine does not appear to have thoroughly comprehended the enemy's tactics, or perceived the extent of his own danger. But, tactics apart, Bazaine should have cut his way through at any sacrifice, on this the last day on which he could have done so, at a

not unreasonable sacrifice of life. If he is accused of want of vigour and of determination, it is not because he did not fight a good battle and inflict great loss upon the enemy, for it is admitted that the Germans lost 16,000 men on the 16th. But Bazaine was fighting for the very existence of his army, as an active field force, and for the safety of Paris, which no other army but his was able to defend. Looking away from the great strategical object to be gained, and referring only to the loss he had inflicted, Bazaine, in his letters to Paris, claimed this battle as a victory, and announced that he had retired "in order to obtain ammunition." The Germans also claimed the victory, and announced that they had captured two eagles, seven guns, and nearly 2,000 prisoners. They had got, however, what was more important to them than any trophies—they held Marshal Bazaine's line of retreat. A grand charge of the cavalry of the 16th German Corps had decided the fortunes of this bloody day, and given Count Moltke the assurance, that although more hard fighting might be before the German army, it had the movements of the enemy under its control. Bazaine that night fell back to Gravelotte, within five miles of Metz, yielding seven miles of the road by which he had marched on the 15th. This was the battle which, at first called after the villages Mars le Tours and Doncourt, has been named by the victors that of Vionville.

Marshal Bazaine was not long in perceiving the magnitude of his defeat, and set himself to oppose the enemy with a vigour which he had not before displayed. He felt sure that he should again be attacked, and spent the 17th in the preparation of a system of most formidable kinds of defence. Bazaine has been severely censured for the strictly defensive nature of his tactics at this crisis; but it should be remembered that he commanded soldiers who, from the beginning of this campaign, and before he

assumed the command, had known nothing but defeat, and who firmly believed even when, as at Vionville, it was not true, that they were invariably outnumbered. It should also be borne in mind that, in a great trial of strength, such as was impending, he might reasonably expect to be outnumbered, and that by troops whose tenacious courage he had tested. He had now under him from 120,000 to 130,000 men, and with these he occupied a series of eminences, extending, in a north-easterly direction from the village of Gravelotte to St. Privat le Montagne, beyond the road to Briey. The position was one of great natural strength, which no trouble was spared to increase by entrenchments, rifle pits, and batteries. Its strongest part was the left, at Gravelotte. The Prussian commander resolved not to begin the general attack until this strong position could be assailed on its right flank, and for this purpose it was necessary to move several corps right across the enemy's front—an operation which Bazaine permitted with singular forbearance. A correspondent who witnessed the battle from the King's field head-quarters—near the Prussian right—wrote to the *Daily News* the following account:—

The first realization we had at Pont-à-Mousson of the extent to which fighting had been going on at the front was the coming in of wounded men. At first it was surmised that these had been wounded in skirmishes; but on the 16th, late in the evening, there were signs that the work was becoming warm. On that evening soldiers with ghastly wounds walked about the market-place in Pont-à-Mousson, surrounded by eager groups of their newly-arrived comrades, and told a story of disaster. Poor fellows! it surely was disaster to them—borne away as they had been from the field without having heard of any result. I stood among these groups, and the narratives of the men all amounted to their having been set

to confront a much larger force than their own, and that their division had been cut up. I was struck by the fact that, though there was some dissatisfaction suggested by their tone of voice, I heard no word uttered by narrators or listeners which accused any one. They dwelt rather on the fact that a heavy blow had been dealt on the 14th; and that though the 10th division had, as an available organization, been demolished, it had sold its life dear. On the 17th the wounded from the preceding day began to pour into Pont-à-Mousson. They were brought in in long uncovered grain carts, lying upon hay. From my window, which overlooked the main street, and commanded also a view of the market-place, I counted more than ninety of these long carts, each holding on an average about ten men. Many more must have gone to the various hospitals. It was strange to see the French citizens unable to conceal their joy as they passed amid files of them on the one hand, and Prussian soldiers on the other. But now came the other side of the account. The streets began to swarm with other waggons, with other wounded—the wearers of red trousers. Now and then a batch of prisoners. And at length a carriage came in with a French general. It was followed by a vast crowd of French, and for a little time it seemed as if there might be a collision between the inhabitants and the Prussians, so earnest were the demonstrations of the populace.

But it was now at least evident that the struggle was very serious at the front. At midnight, or a little after (17th—18th), all the trumpets for miles around began to sound. This was the first time we had been startled at that hour by such wild music. Trumpet answered to trumpet through all the bivouacs around the little city. For several days previous there had been troops almost perpetually marching through; but now the

tramp through every street and by-way made between midnight and dawn a perpetual roar. Hastily dressing, I ran out into the darkness, and managed to get a seat on a waggon that was going in the direction of the front—now understood to be a mile or two beyond the village of Gorze. Gorze is some twelve miles from Pont-à-Mousson. On our way me met a considerable batch of French prisoners, who were looked upon with great curiosity by the continuous file of German soldiers with whom we advanced; but only one or two offensive cries towards the prisoners were heard, and these fortunately they could not understand. The way was so blocked with waggons, &c., that I finally concluded that I could go the six or seven miles remaining better on foot. So I got out of my carriage and began to walk and run swiftly ahead. At Novéant-aux-Pres, on the Moselle, about half way to Metz, I found vast bodies of cavalry, Uhlans and Hussars, crossing the river by a pontoon bridge, and hurrying at the top of their speed towards Gorze. Hastening my steps, I soon heard the first thunder of the cannonade, seemingly coming from the heart of a range of hills on the right. Passing through the village and ascending to the high plain beyond, I found myself suddenly on a battle-field, strewn (literally) as far as my eye could reach with dead bodies—the field of the battle of Vionville on the 16th. In one or two parts of the field parties were still burying the dead, chiefly Prussians. The French, being naturally buried last, were still lying in vast numbers on the ground. A few of these—I saw five—were not dead. As I hurried on, a splendid regiment of cavalry came on behind, and when they came to the brow of the hill, they all broke out with a wild hurrah, and dashed forward. A few more steps, and I gained the summit, and saw the scene which had roused their cry, and even seemed to thrill their horses. It

would be difficult to imagine a grander battle-field. From the particular hill to which I had been directed to come by good authority—it was occupied by the Royal Head-quarters—the sweep of the Prussian and French centres could be seen, and a considerable part of their wings. The spot where I stood was fearful—it was amid ghastly corpses, and burdened with the stench of dead horses, of which there were a great many. I was standing on the battle-field of the 16th, on the Prussian side. On the left, stretched like a silver thread the road to Verdun, to Paris also, for the possession of which this series of battles had begun. It was between lines of poplars, which stood against the horizon on my left, and on as far as the eye could reach towards Metz, with military regularity. Strung on this road like beads were the pretty villages, each with its church tower, which, although they have separate names, are really only a few hundred yards apart—Mars la-Tour, Flavigny (a little south of the road), Vionville, Rezonville, Malmaison, Gravelotte. On my right were the thickly-wooded hills, behind which the most important village of the neighbourhood, the one I had just left—Gorze. Such was the foreground of this battle, which should, one would say, be called the battle of Gravelotte, for it was mainly over and beyond that devoted little town that it raged. The area I have indicated is about four miles square. Owing to having come on foot rather than along the blocked road I was fortunate enough to arrive just as the battle waxed warm —that is about noon. The great representatives of Prussia were standing on the same ground watching the conflict. Among them the only ones I recognized were the King, Count Bismarck, General von Moltke, Prince Carl, Prince Friedrich Carl, Prince Adalbert, and Adjutant Kranski. Lieut.-General Sheridan, of the United States, was also present.

At this moment the French were making a most desperate effort to hold on to the last bit of the Verdun road, that between Rezonville and Gravelotte — or that part of Gravelotte which on some maps is called Malmaison. Desperate but unavailing! For every one man in their ranks had two to cope with, and their line, at the place indicated, was already beginning to waver. Soon it was plain that this wing was withdrawing to a new position. This was swiftly taken up, under protection of a continuous blaze of their artillery from heights beyond the village. The movement was made in good order, and the position reached was one that, I believe, nine out of ten military men would have regarded as normally impregnable. My reader will observe that the battle-field was from this time transferred to the regions beyond Gravelotte. The fields in front of that village were completely covered by the Prussian reserves, and over it interminable lines of soldiers were perpetually marching onward — disappearing into the village, emerging on the other side of it with flaming volleys. This second battle-field was less extensive than the first, and brought the combatants into fearfully close quarters. The peculiarity of it is that it consists of two heights, intersected by a deep ravine. This woody ravine is over 100 feet deep, and at the top from 200 to 300 yards wide. The side of the chasm next to Gravelotte, where the Prussians stood, is much lower than the other side, which gradually ascended to a great height. From this their commanding eminence the French held their enemies fairly beneath them, and subjected them to a raking fire. Their artillery was stationed far up by the Metz road, between its trees. There was not an instant's cessation of the roar; and easily distinguishable amid all was the curious grunting roll of the mitrailleuse. The Prussian artillery was to the north and south of the village, the mouths of

the guns on the latter side being necessarily raised for an awkward upward fire. The French stood their ground and died. the Prussians moved ever forward and died—both by hundreds, I had almost said thousands; this for an hour or two that seemed ages, so fearful was the slaughter. The hill where I stood commanded chiefly the conflict behind the village and to the south of it. The Prussian reinforcements on their right filed out of the Bois des Ognons; and it was at that point, as they marched on to the field, that one could perhaps get the best idea of the magnitude of the invading army now in the heart of France. There was no break whatever for four hours in the march of the men out of that wood. It seemed almost as if all the killed and wounded had recovered and came again out of the wood. Birnam Wood advancing to Dunsinane was not a more ominous sight to Macbeth than these men of General Göben's army, shielded by the woods till they were fairly within range of their enemies. So the French must have felt, for between four and five o'clock they concentrated a most furious fire upon that point, and shelled the woods perpetually. Their fire here took effect. The line of Prussian infantry became less continuous from that direction. About five o'clock, however, an infantry brigade emerged from the same point. As soon as they did so they advanced by double-quick time towards the point where their services were needed. I watched this brigade through a strong glass from the first. It resembled some huge serpent gliding out on the field. But, lo! it left a track behind it—a dark track. Beneath the glass that track is resolved into fallen, struggling men.

As the horrid significance of that path so traced came upon me I gazed yet more intently. Many of those who had fallen leapt up and ran forward, struggling to catch up

with their comrades again. I did not see any running backward, though many fell in their effort to rush on. I do not know whether after that another movement was made from behind the wood; but I do know that half an hour afterwards vast numbers of troops began to march over the southern edge of the hill where I was standing towards the battle-field, and I have an impression that these were General Göben's men moving by a less dangerous route. The conflict on the Prussian left was so fierce that it soon became nearly lost to us by reason of its smoke. Now and then this would open a little, and drift under the wind, and then we could see the French sorely tried, but maintaining themselves steadily. In order to see this part of the conflict better, I went forward as near as I thought safe. It seemed to me that in the vicinity of Malmaison the French were having the best of it. But it must have been only because they were more visible on their broad height, and fought so obstinately—plainly silencing a battery now and then. But from this northern point also there are more forces to come; and from far behind them—away seemingly in the direction of Verneville—huge bombs are coming and bursting with terrible force upon the French ranks. These were the men and these the guns of Prince Friedrich Carl, who was slowly veering southward to make his connection with Steinmetz' army, completing the investment of Metz.

The battle raged at this point with indescribable fury. The French Generals must have known the significance of these new guns, and known that, if their right retreated, the result must be that incarceration in Metz which now exists. How long they held out here I do not know. I could hear that the puff of their guns was from a gradually receding line; that the mysterious pillars of cloud from the north as steadily approached;

but the last fired on that terrible evening were on that side, and the point must have been yielded at about nine o'clock.

Perhaps I should here say something of the movements of the King, and those with him. The King's face, as he stood gazing upon the battle-field, had something almost plaintive in it. He hardly said a word; but I observed that his attention was divided between the exciting scenes in the distance and the sad scenes nearer his feet—where they were just beginning (what must yet be a long task) to bury the French who fell on the Tuesday before. On these he gazed silently, and, I thought, sadly. Count Bismarck was intent only on the battle, and could not conceal his excitement and anxiety; if it had not been for the King, I am pretty sure he would have gone nearer; and, as it was, his towering form was always a little ahead of the rest. When the French completely gave up their hold upon the road up to Gravelotte, the horses of the "Grosshauptquartiers" party were hastily called, and mounting them they all—with the King at their head—rode swiftly down to a point not very far from the village. Then shouts and cheers arose, which I could plainly hear at the point they had left, where, not having a horse, I was compelled to remain a little longer.

A little after four o'clock a strange episode took place. From the distant woods on the left a splendid regiment of cavalry galloped out. They paused a moment at the point where the Conflans road joins that leading to Metz; then they dashed up the road towards Metz. This road between Gravelotte and St. Hubert is cut through the hill, and there are on each side of it cliffs from forty to sixty feet high, except at the point where it traverses the deep ravine behind the village. When it is remembered that at this time the

culminating point to which this road directly ascends was held by the French, it will not be wondered at that only a moiety of that regiment survived. What the survivors accomplished I do not know, nor could I learn the name and number of the regiment. The situation hardly admits yet of our asking many questions. But their plunge into that deep cut in the hill-side, where next day I saw so many of them and their horses lying dead, was of that brave, unhesitating, unfaltering kind, which is so characteristic of German soldiers, among whom cowards, stragglers, and deserters seem to be absolutely unknown, in whatever rank.

must record, also, what seemed an inexplicable thing. The army of Steinmetz was fighting very hard, and evidently suffering heavily. It was in the centre of Gravelotte, though occasionally rallying to one side or the other. Though they had large reserves, these had been diminished to an important extent by the engagements of the 14th and 16th. A considerable portion of his army required rest, and two divisions perhaps, certainly one, reorganization. There seemed at one time—about half-past four—some danger that the intensity of the fighting required on the right and left extremes would produce a kind of atrophy along that very central Verdun road for which the armies were struggling. At that time a vast army came from some region utterly mysterious to us who had been following the army for some miles. They came over the very point which had been the Royal head-quarters in the morning. Their march was begun at the time I have mentioned, and did not cease at all—not even after dark—so long as the firing was still going on upon the heights. This new army—whose was it?—whence was it? It did not come from the direction of Göben, nor of Steinmetz, nor of Prince Friedrich Carl. Of course it could not be said that it did not belong to

either of these, but the cry and rumour went around that these men were from the army of the Crown Prince. I do not know whether to believe this or not, but it is freely said and believed by many officers here that a detachment of the Crown Prince's army was sent up from Toul to help, if help were needed. To whomsoever or wheresoever this Army Corps (for it was about that in extent) belonged, its presence was nearly all that was required. It was laid along the road, out of immediate danger, so that if the French centre had defeated the troops with which it was contending, it must simply have fallen into the hands of a fresh and prepared corps.

The advance of this new corps must have been felt by them as a final, a fatal blow for that day. Like the spirits in the "Inferno," their enemies were consumed only to spring up to full stature again. They must have realized how hopelessly they were outnumbered. From that time the struggle at that part became very weak on the French side, and the Prussians got a decided hold farther up the Metz road—that is on the southern side of it. But there seemed to be a redoubled fury on their left. From seven o'clock to eight there was little firing beyond the village, but a great tower of cloud and fire at each extremity of the battle-field A little before eight a large white house on the heights beyond Gravelotte caught fire. It seemed through the gloom to be a church; its spire was now a mass of flame, and it sent up a vast cloud of black smoke, which contrasted curiously with the white smoke of battle.

Darkness was now drawing on, and after eight we could trace the direction of troops by the fiery paths of their bombs, or the long tongue of fire darting from each cannon's mouth. The lurid smoke-clouds of burning houses joined with the night to cast a pall over the scene and hide it for ever. At half-past eight o'clock one more

terrible attack by the French on the Prussian right—and that is over. At a quarter to nine a fearful volley against the extreme Prussian left, a continuous concert of artillery, and the growling whirr of the mitrailleuse above all—and then that is still. The battle of Gravelotte is ended, and the Prussians hold the heights beyond the Bois de Vaux—heights which command the surrounding country up to the limits of the gun-ranges of Metz. As I went back to the village of Gorze to pass the night, I turned at the last point to look upon the battle-field. It was now a long, earth-bound cloud, with two vast fires —burning houses—at each end of it. The day had been beautiful, and now the stars looked down with splendour, except where the work of agony and death had clouded the glow of heaven.

The great battle of Gravelotte, the last of the series which began on the 14th of August at Courcelles, has been called the Borodino of the campaign. The thanksgivings which went up throughout Germany for its victorious issue were tempered with sorrow and awe. The slaughter had been terrific. The Prussian Government was slow to proclaim the extent of its losses, but very soon a wail went up throughout Germany, as it was found that hardly a family had escaped bereavement. The flower of the Prussian nobility fell on that fatal day. But the victory, if dearly bought, was assured. General Palikao, who had succeeded M. Emile Ollivier as First Minister of the Empire at Paris, was interrogated day after day in the Chamber, and insisted that the advantage was with the French. So far, he said, was it from being true that the Germans had been successful, that Marshal Bazaine had "driven the Prussians into the quarries of Jaucortt." Bazaine, however, had sent word to Paris that his retreat was cut off, and two days after the battle he reported that the enemy showed signs of "an inten-

tion to invest him." By the 22d this intention had become a fact. From that day dates that series of works by which the batteries erected to close the roads from Metz to Verdun gradually became a system of fortifications that girdled and ultimately strangled the proudest city of France. Bazaine had lost the opportunity of breaking through the lines of the assailants, and, shut in at Metz, he was destined not only to surrender his own army there, but to draw another army towards him to its utter destruction.

CHAPTER V.

THE hopes of Paris and France were now turned to the camp at Châlons, whither MacMahon had led the troops which he had been able to rally from his beaten army, and to which also De Failly had conducted a corps that in all the war had not once seen the enemy. Thither, too, the Emperor had gone, and at a council of war it was resolved that General Trochu should command the army in Paris; that the troops collected at Châlons should be directed towards the capital under the orders of Marshal MacMahon; and that the Emperor should go to Paris. To this arrangement the Council of Ministers by which the Empress-Regent was surrounded offered the most decided objection. Paris, it was said, was in a perfect state of defence, with a numerous garrison, and the army of Châlons ought to be employed in breaking the blockade of Metz. The return of the Emperor would be misunderstood by the public.

While these questions were being discussed, the position of Marshal MacMahon at Châlons became daily less tenable. During the memorable fortnight that ended in the grand defeat of Gravelotte, the Crown Prince had been leading his great army through Lorraine, and was approaching the plains of Champagne. It is time to glance at the features of his unresisted progress. As the army was making its way past Phalsburg, the Special Correspondent of the *Daily News* wrote, on the 15th of August:—

Since my last letter there has been marching to the front

and spreading out on the flanks. There has been more and more French territory occupied by the Prussians, and yet no further fighting of importance, as far as we know, up to the present moment. It would appear that the French are concentrating their forces on Metz, and, perhaps, on Châlons. We see that they wish to avoid a contest until they have a better chance than at Wörth, which is very wise on their part. Meanwhile the fortresses of Strasburg, Phalsburg, and Bitsche form islands in the sea of invasion. I will not say barriers against invasion, but islands to impede the rush of the tide a little. They are the material holds which France still keeps on her semi-German province, and in case of a check, might prove dangerous to the rear-guard of the great invading army. I set no high value on any but first-class fortresses. A place that would hold fifty thousand men in the neighbourhood of Wörth would have saved Alsace from invasion—or saved all but the north-eastern part of it, at any rate—if only MacMahon had made his stand behind the works. But little fortresses like Bitsche and Phalsburg are useless, save as checks to the invader. They cannot stop him for an instant, though they can and do occupy many of his troops. Here is Phalsburg, for example, which has already detained a number of German guns for two or three days, and which, when I last saw it, showed no sign of giving in. True, the guns thus detained are of light calibre. They are nevertheless kept from other work, and this is something for Phalsburg to do.

The town was sharply cannonaded this morning, and I went to see the German batteries open fire. There was a slight haze over the surrounding country at daybreak, but as the sun grew more powerful, the haze lifted into gently driving clouds. A breeze, just strong enough to temper the heat of the weather, stirred the leaves of the

tall poplar trees along the straight French *chaussées*, and it was altogether as fine a morning as you could wish to see. From a hillock behind the village of Zilling, there was a splendid view of both the attack and defence. Phalsburg could be seen among the trees at the top of a stretch of rising ground, and we could distinguish a part of the old rampart with its shady avenue. To our left, across the open fields, dotted with red-roofed farm buildings, was some rising ground opposite to Phalsburg, and here were the besieging batteries, which could scarcely be distinguished at all until their fire commenced. The whole district, for miles away, was spread out like a map before us, and we saw the Vosges mountains to the eastward shutting us off from the valley of the Rhine. Had it not been such a deadly game that was to be played, such a terrible moment of anxiety for the people of the little town, there could have been no pleasanter excursion than this one to see the batteries begin their work. I tell no secret when I say that the German attack was made with field artillery, and that a great many of these light guns had been brought into position. The capture of Phalsburg is an important point for the Crown Prince, but not important enough to make the army wait for heavy siege guns. Prussian tactics are to push forward and mask the fortresses which are encountered on the way, leaving a few battalions to watch them.

From our positions on the hillock behind Zilling everything is to be seen. Now a puff of white smoke goes up on the left and a fierce rush through the air tells of a passing shell. It falls in the town. Poor souls within, they did not fancy when war was declared how soon their rafters would be crashing about their ears! Yet they live in a fortified place, and must take their chance. But we cannot help a wish that the shells may only

damage public property, as shriek after shriek through the air tells of their passage. Now there is firing from the right. The French gunners have manned their pieces, and reply in excellent style. Flash after flash comes out from the old rampart. The smoke curls up among those shady trees where the garrison have often sat in summer evenings with pipe or cigar, and where the nursemaids have brought children to play. You know the look of these old ramparts in peace time, and can fancy them now, with only soldiers upon them, who are in no sporting mood. There is flash after flash from the ramparts and from the opposite rising ground! There is a constant whistling and shrieking across the space between, and a flying up of dust among the German guns, or a crash among the roofs of the town, as one side or the other makes a hit. If Phalsburg is in good order, the determined commandant may earn promotion by a long defence; but if his works once get disabled, he is lost. The Germans have a strong force, as we can see, ready to advance, and after Weissenburg we know that mere ramparts will not stop them. See the dark-coloured smoke rising above the trees and floating away behind the church tower. One column of smoke, then another. It is clear that houses are burning, but not so clear that the French guns are silenced. They fire more slowly than their assailants, and seem to aim rather high. But there is heavy metal in the booming reports which come from the Phalsburg ramparts. Three distinct columns of dark smoke rise from the town. It is sad to think of the suffering of any inhabitants who may have rashly remained. What would our friend the "Conscrit" of Erckmann-Chatrian's delightful tales say if he saw the days of the great war come back again, and the foe from beyond the Rhine besieging his dear old town? That big gun from the rampart booms forth

again, and the smoke-clouds rise thicker than ever. It is a good defence. One can fancy how the hearts of the villagers round about must beat at each shriek of the besiegers' shells. They have doubtless friends and relations who may be injured in person or property by every shot that is fired. Would that the lesson of the "Conscrit" and its sequel had gone home in France, and that this war had not been brought about!

The people have become more and more French as we have advanced. They have gradually ceased to speak German at all, and the confusion of a veritable foreign conquest has arisen. From the stolid careless air of the Alsatian peasants we have come among men who are bitterly wounded at what is happening around them. The fluent, though rough, German dialect of a few days back is exchanged for a stray sentence of broken German, and a copious supply of clear metallic French, rattled out with an irreproachable accent. We are at last really in France. I have seen twenty cases of mistaken phrases, and of, consequently, mistaken wrath. "*Sagen sie mir wo ist das Haupt-Quartier?*" is met by "*Ah, Monsieur, nous n'avons plus du cognac;*" and so on with every variety of blunder. The soldiers are not inclined to be harsh, if only they get what they think they ought to have, and there is nothing to alarm the inhabitants in the demeanour of their terrible foes. But this difference of language begins to make the everyday intercourse of conquerors and conquered far from smooth. The French accept their ill-luck fairly enough; what they are put out of temper by is being shouted at in strange tongues and shaken by the shoulder if they are dull. One of their favourite theories is that all civilized men speak a little of the language of the world, and here are thousands of men, civilized enough to outshoot the Chassepôt, who speak not a single intelligible word. It is very hard for our lively neighbours. Let me

do them justice—let me do both sides justice—they bear it like sensible men, and the Germans are not angry or vindictive. I cannot but think that the whole scene as we advance is a tribute to modern civilization. Here are young girls standing laughing at the cottage doors, not a bit afraid of violence; and we pass after a hundred thousand men, more or less, have gone by along that same road. It would not have been so in the Thirty Years' War. It would scarcely have been so some fifty years back. But here it is to-day. The village maidens stand half-shy, half-curious, to see the Prince and his Staff ride on their way; the old people sit basking in the sunshine, and shaking their heads over the evil days. One can remember 1814, with the Allies going to Paris, another has seen something of the army of the First Napoleon, and thinks that if the Old Guard were alive they would make a breakfast of these gentlemen. I notice that the younger and more active men look gloomily at the long columns which pass. The honour of *La Belle France* is involved in this affair, and they are sad to see her territory invaded. Take it as a whole, the conduct of the people is quiet and reasonable. They shrug their shoulders and say with a smile, we have not had our turn yet; wait till the Emperor is ready!

It is the Fête Napoléon, and no flags or fireworks are allowed in honour of the day. Nevertheless, I notice that many villagers are in holiday attire. The habit of the thing is followed without any particular care to compliment the Imperial family, for, as you may imagine, I hear many curses against the policy of war. As we came along to-day through the harvest fields, a few people were at work, in spite of the fête, and the invasion, and everything else, for, as one of the peasants said, it is such a hard time for them that they must earn all they can. A battle must soon occur, but we know so little of the French movements, that it is impossible to say in which

direction the blow will fall. "Forward to Paris" is the cry of the German soldiers. The commanders are content as yet to bear heavily against the French centre in Lorraine, and to threaten the road to Châlons.

On the 17th, the same Correspondent wrote from near Nancy:—

In all the panic of the invasion, and all the losses of the French, that bold Governor of Phalsburg, General Talhouet, has stood out as an example of what governors of fortresses should be. He was gallantly holding his own when we had a glimpse of his battered defences, and of the smoke from the burning town. He received a flag of truce with a firm refusal to surrender, and added, that next day, it being the fête of His Majesty the Emperor, he should fire a salute of 21 guns. The salute was not to be fired from the front, but from the flank of the works, to show that it was not part of the defence. I have heard the Prussian officers speak loudly in praise of this Phalsburg commandant. "If we do starve him out," they say, "we will give him a good dinner when he comes to our camp." And so they would, you may depend.

have passed through the city of Nancy, which was full of German troops. The Bavarian part of the Southern Army was there in full force. Sky-blue uniforms were to be seen at every turn. Crested helmets of the Bavarian infantry were thronging the footways, and fresh-faced young soldiers looked out of upper windows by dozens. The numerous French inhabitants seemed absolutely stupefied, and groups of well-dressed men stood staring at the invaders as though they had never seen soldiers before. It was a striking sight—the large French city occupied by foreigners; the subjects of the Emperor burdened by quartering of the Germans, whose country they were to have invaded themselves ten days since! It is a hard thing to be thus overrun. But

the Germans are less harsh than might have been feared, when we think how angry they were three weeks ago!

From Nancy the same Correspondent wrote on the 19th of August, the day after the battle of Gravelotte:—

The battles of the 16th and of yesterday have produced a great change in the French position. From being merely weak and precarious, that position has become positively dangerous. On Tuesday the French troops were forced back from the southern road from Metz to Paris, and were compelled to maintain a doubtful struggle two days after for their only remaining road westward, that from Metz to Verdun in a slightly northerly curve. If what we now hear be true, you will have already learned by telegraph that the French right has been completely turned, and that the northern road to Paris is also thoroughly occupied by the Germans. Both the roads from Metz being cut by the Prussians, Paris is well nigh lost already. The National Guard can never cope with the Prussians in the field, and France has not enough of trained soldiers to equip at once another army. For these reasons I think that yesterday's battle has proved fatal to the Emperor's plan of defence. The battle of Tuesday, the 16th, was very bloody, and at one moment the French pressed hard upon their invaders. You will have heard of the splendid charge of Prussian light cavalry, which gave time for the 10th Corps to come up in support of the gallant fellows of the 3rd Corps, and of the capture of two or more French eagles towards the close of the day. That light cavalry charge of the Prussians was superior to our famous charge of Balaclava, inasmuch as it served the highest military purpose—the winning of a battle; and was superior to the French heavy cavalry charge at Wörth, inasmuch as it was done with a chance of success. The French at

Wörth threw away their cuirassiers like madmen, whilst the Prussians, in this battle of August 16, saved a *corps d'armée* by the heroic self-sacrifice of the light dragoon regiments, which dashed into the French line to gain time for the 10th Corps to come up. I hear that on the 16th and yesterday the French troops fought with desperate courage, and that on both days the Imperial Guard was under fire. But brave as were the men on one side, those on the other were their equals in courage, whilst they had better generalship to lead them to victory. The Prussians are resolved to conquer or die. Theirs is not a passing excitement, stirring the blood for a day, but the long-pondered determination of an earnest people. They have lost frightfully in these last battles. Thousands of German soldiers have been killed and wounded. Yet in the end of each fight they have pushed back the desperate Frenchman, and have carried out their Generals' plans with admirable devotion. And now a word of the Third Army, commanded by the Crown Prince. While Steinmetz and Prince Frederick Charles have done so well on the right of the main French army, the Crown Prince has occupied a more and more threatening position on the right of the whole French position. Unless General de Failly can quickly muster a sufficient force to cover Central and Southern France, the Empire will be exposed to imminent danger in regions which are quite unprepared for defence. Once relieved from the possibility of a movement from the northward, the Crown Prince can do pretty much as he likes in other quarters.

It cannot be denied that the smaller French fortresses are making a gallant resistance. Phalsburg has already become a great name in the war, on account of its holding out so obstinately; and Toul, the old cathedral town, the quietest, most unwarlike of bygone strongholds, has just been successfully repelling a somewhat

serious attack. Toul lies westward of Nancy; and the Third Army, which is charged with clearing the country in that direction, has run foul of its ramparts. There seems to have been a mistake as to the condition of the place for defence, and yesterday morning's attack was met with great vigour by the French garrison. They did not venture on a sortie to follow up their advantage, but they inflicted a certain loss on the assailants, with, as far as we know, very little loss to themselves. The news has caused great joy in Nancy, where the people are disgusted by a military occupation, and burn to hear of French successes. I saw dozens of well-dressed young men crowding the road to Toul to gather any fresh scrap of information, and the peasants in the wayside cottages were all curiosity to see the wounded pass. If a proper system of wholesale conscription had put all these city youths and curious peasants in the army or the Landwehr, France need not have been in this state of anxious despondency. She has men enough, and to spare, but only three or four hundred thousand soldiers. Her National Guard is but a half-trained militia, whilst the Prussian Landwehr is as good as the Line. Even now the Landwehr is advancing in force to support the active army. It will besiege the fortresses, fill up the gaps in the line of defence, and hold the conquered provinces while the army goes on to Paris.

One must needs pity these conquered provinces. They do not suffer any of what are *technically* called "the horrors of war." Young girls stand at the cottage doors in the villages, or at the street corners in the towns, to see the soldiers pass, and are not injured by them. Shops are open in the towns and are not plundered; peaceable citizens go about their business without fear for life or limb. It is essentially a civilized war in these respects. But fruit and vegetables are taken along the

wayside, horses are pressed into the service, soldiers are quartered on the people, and large supplies of food are demanded from the local authorities. My wish is to give you a true picture of what takes place, and neither to make much of the angry complaints which I hear from the French, nor to treat such complaints as lightly as the Germans are inclined to do. The fact is, that if we start with a notion of war founded on what the armies of the French Republic did to their enemies in 1795–6, this German invasion of France in 1870 will seem very civilized and merciful. If, on the contrary, we take our stand on the rights of private property and the highest English ideal of a "ready-money commissariat," there will seem to be something harsh and oppressive in the quartering of troops on the villagers. All foreigners have this notion, that troops should be quartered on the conquered people, who find their visitors in food. The luckless village which lies near the road is eaten up by thousands of unwelcome guests, and the more remote village escapes with a trifling loss. However, there is hope for the world, and progress in even the laws of war. This is a bitter time for the conquered French, and many individuals—farmers, horse-dealers, and wayside cottagers—suffer grievous loss. But when we compare it with the bad old wars of former days, we see that progress has been made.

The ancient city of Nancy is sad and gloomy; that is to say, the people of the city are sad. I cannot extend such a description to the mere outward effect of the streets. True, the shutters are closed in many of the shops, the hotels are almost empty, and the cafés in some quarters deserted. These things do not sound cheerful; yet there is plenty of noise and bustle. Soldiers are here, there, and everywhere. Military convoys rumble through the streets, and orderlies with messages go

clattering in and out of the gates. There is no lack of movement among the troops. One detachment is succeeded by another with the regularity of clockwork The railway is to be used as far as practicable to lighten the traffic on the roads, and everything is to be pushed forward as though time were counted by hours and not by days. Well may the citizens stand with folded arms and stare gloomily at the passing regiments. Loud sound the drums and trumpets, heavy and steady is the tramp of the soldiers' feet. You look at them with wonder as part of an inexhaustible conjuring trick. Still more and more of them coming westward. "Alas!" cry the conquered people of Lorraine, "it is not an army, but a nation which comes." Alas, indeed, for the wayside cottages, which will be burdened with constant billeting; alas for the artisans in the towns, who earn so little in these troubled times, and must entertain military lodgers all the same! I know that the French are to blame for the war, but I cannot help being sorry for the individuals who suffer so much loss and discomfort. They say that as mere lodgers, apart from the question of feeding them, the German troops behave quietly enough. They behave better to the French than the Turcos and Zouaves would have behaved to them in their German towns. No doubt they do. But what a long way off that other side of the picture seems, now that Germany has struck her blow!

Whilst there seemed a chance that Bazaine might gain a battle near Metz, that the desperate efforts of the Imperial Guard might turn the scale against the skill and spirit of the Prussians, it was necessary to hold the Third Army in readiness to march northward. Accordingly, while the battles of Vionville and Gravelotte were raging, the Third Army lay in the country about Nancy and Luneville, half

expecting to be ordered up in support of the other German armies. When news of the defeat of the French by Steinmetz and Prince Frederick Charles arrived, the advance to Paris was resumed, though only for a time, as narrated in the following letter, from the Crown Prince's head-quarters, dated Vaucouleurs, August 21 :—

The Third Army, which led off with such brilliant success in the beginning of the war, has been waiting impatiently for its turn to come again. It is an army which shows France a very good picture of the united Germany that is arrayed against her. There are the sky-blue uniforms of the Bavarians, the darker colours of the Würtemberg and Baden troops, and the spiked helmets of the Prussians, mingled together in a common cause. All are full of zeal to distinguish themselves under the eyes of the Crown Prince, and all are impatient—in soldier-like fashion—to have as much fighting as possible. It has been the misfortune of France in this struggle to have been so much dreaded as a probable invader, that she herself has been invaded with the energy of a great patriotic movement on her enemy's part. The German soldiers are even now as anxious to fight at any cost, and as prodigal of their lives in battle, as though they were making a stand upon the Rhine.

The roads are crowded with trains of ammunition waggons, with stores of provisions, and with masses of infantry. Woe to the luckless wayside villages ; woe to the farmers who have crops in wayside fields. There is no danger to life or limb among the peaceable inhabitants, but there is danger of being fairly eaten out of house and home. There is an unavoidable trampling down of crops in the fields where the soldiers pass, and there is such a demand for means of transport as leaves little chance to the farmer of keeping his horses for himself.

He gets a receipt of some sort in most cases. But no amount of paper security will comfort the average French farmer in the present crisis. Poor man! it is such an unexpected blow. "Why does the Emperor make war," I have heard a dozen sad-looking men in blouses exclaim, "if he knows not how to make it?" A plébiscite in the occupied districts at this moment would need no foreign pressure to be flooded with "nons."

There is a straight and rapid march westward of the Third Army, supported by other troops. Without seeking to set forth the details of the movement in any manner that could help the other side, I may put it down that more than a hundred and fifty thousand men, full of confidence, flushed with victory, and splendidly organized, are about to beat up the quarters of the French. Three or four columns are marching abreast on some of the roads. Two go by the road itself, and in some cases two more move through the fields to right and left, or at least one other column makes a way which is a little out of order serve the purpose of the moment. Great are the "blocks" and crushes, tremendous the swearing at critical corners. But, on the whole, it is remarkable how well these columns are directed; how carefully they choose their routes through the invaded provinces. Wheels are rumbling and whips are cracking along many a road. The columns are halted to rest in some places, and there may be seen the bright bivouac fire twinkling in the fields, or long lines of horses standing silently at supper. Though many columns are halted, others are moving on. The road is still alive with military preparation. Do not fancy the pomp and circumstance of war as attending the march of the columns of supply. It is a pretty sight to see the Lancers or Dragoons who lead the invasion trotting over hill and dale, with every nerve strained to detect a

possible foe. There is an impressive force about the advance of the dusty and tired infantry—the murmur of many voices, and tramp of many feet passing forward like a storm sighing in the woods. Even the weight and slowness of the guns has its own peculiar dignity. They are deadly weapons in charge of determined fighting men. But the innumerable columus of supply, the baggage and ammunition, the food and provender, are very prosaic, though very necessary. There are miles of hay waggons—a good omen for cavalry horses. Farther on are other miles of bread waggons, of bacon and beef waggons. Horned cattle are led along by the score to become beef in due time; clothes and equipments, medicines, and blankets, are brought rumbling on into France. If the people were astonished at the earlier stages of the journey, they are now simply bewildered beyond all power of recovery. An avalanche has fallen upon them.

One cannot see it for one's self, but the sight of the advancing host, as a wayside village sees it, from first to last, must be something to remember. The people will tell in a dreamy way how they heard that the Prussians were coming. There was news of them four, five, six days ago, as the case may be. Yes, *ma foi*, they heard that they were coming, but did not believe it. Then there was a party of Lancers seen upon the road. The people wondered what would happen. Monsieur le Curé told them that in modern wars they did not kill those who remained quiet, so their confidence was enough to keep them at home. The village shop was shut, and everybody closed his door and peeped from the window. Now the Lancers rode into the street, and a few came forward to the principal house—the Hotel de Ville—if the place ranked as a "bourg," or small town. The soldiers asked for food and drink, said they would do no

harm if they were not molested, and presently got off their horses. With details very slightly varying, I have heard of this first entry in several places, and have heard how infantry soon began to come: one regiment—two, three, a dozen regiments. The bread was eaten, the wine was drunk, and the people were well nigh ruined by feeding their guests. Were they bad fellows in their way? A delicate question this, and one to which a stranger can expect but a guarded answer. What sort of fellows were they, these invading soldiers? "Oh, not very bad, if only they had not such dreadful appetites, and if they could make themselves understood." It is hard to be shaken and growled at in *La Belle France* itself for not speaking the language of the German Fatherland. It is harder still to have a slip of paper, negotiable Heaven knows when, instead of a good cart-horse, or fat bullock. But the conquered people suffered far more in olden times. I feel sure that the French will be very angry and apt to magnify their ill-fortune, great as it is, and I think that the best thing which can be done is to state frankly the sort of injury endured by the peasants, the taking of cattle, and eating up of bread, whilst stating as frankly that I have heard no complaint of personal violence, and that the women do not seem at all afraid of the rough, loud-voiced fellows who swarm around them. The columns pour steadily on. We wonder what is being done for defence on the other side, and cannot but admire the little piece of defensive work which the garrison of Toul is doing close to us. Like Phalsburg, the city of Toul is a point of gallant resistance, but not in any way a rallying point for the surrounding people. The fortress is held, and the enemy passes on without troubling himself to take it. Both at Phalsburg and at Toul there has been an experimental

attack, which has given the garrison an opportunity of distinction. I should add that the French authorities seem disposed to avoid unnecessary destruction of property by merely blowing up and knocking down to hinder the Germans. There are no traces of an attempt at *la petite guerre*, as far as I have yet seen. The French simply retreat clear out of reach when they do not mean to fight in earnest, and leave the open towns and villages to be quietly occupied by the advancing foe.

If the grim old Sieur de Vaucouleurs were again on earth he would not be surprised at any amount of invasion. It was as natural in his day that France should be invaded as that the grapes and corn should ripen on the sunny hill-sides near his castle. But he had a distinct idea of what should be done under circumstances like the present. Invasion was to be met by vigorous resistance. The Sieur de Vaucouleurs would have ordered a *levée en masse* of the inhabitants, and allowed even women to fight. In the church of this little town is a painted window, put there centuries after, to record the giving of her sword to Joan of Arc. Over the Hotel de Ville is a statue of the Maid, and her fame is the great souvenir of Vaucouleurs. It is a souvenir which bears on the actual state of things in France. Not that the French army has need of encouragement by an inspired heroine, but that everything must depend on whether France can trust her raw recruits, her National Guard, and her hasty levies of all kinds. The French army is fighting hard, as the terrible losses on both sides near Metz sufficiently prove. But the army alone is overmatched by the Germans. They, too, are fighting hard, are throwing away their lives with splendid bravery, and they can bring at least five trained men against three. So France must call out every citizen soldier, and must give each man the spirit of 1792, or of the old

days of Joan of Arc, if she would avoid a heavy payment for her rash aggression. The Guard Mobile will have to bear its part in what is coming, and to meet, not a half-trained force like itself, but the best troops of Germany. There is a rapid concentration of troops, under the command of the Crown Prince, which threatens the road to Châlons; there is an ample force left to watch Metz; and there are masses of well-trained Landwehr men advancing by every road between the Rhine and the Meuse. Phalsburg will be left to the Landwehr to besiege, so will Bitsche, and probably Strasburg. The whole of the active army of Germany will be available to blockade Metz or capture Châlons. There is such bustle in the streets of Vaucouleurs that the younger portion of the inhabitants are very well amused, in spite of their misgivings about the public safety. Boys and girls who are old enough to run about alone get into snug corners to feast their eyes on the horses and the uniforms. Especially do they like to gather near the quarters of the Prince, and observe from a little distance the Royal standard waving over the entrance, and the two soldiers in spiked helmets pacing up and down. It is no idle task that mounting guard at the Prince's door, for the number of officers who pass makes the duty one of constant saluting. The Germans neglect nothing on account of the war, but are established here as tranquilly as they might be at Berlin or Munich. I own that the crowd in proportion to the space would be appalling for a city in time of peace. But there is such order and regularity in the whole system, and the different functionaries settle so promptly into their new quarters, that they seem to have been here two months rather than two days.

CHAPTER VI.

FROM the 8th of August, when the disasters of Wörth and Forbach became known in Paris, until the 3rd of September, when the capitulation of Sedan became known, it was universally recognized that the Empire was on its last trial. By extraordinary achievments it might turn to profit this term of grace, but only some supereminent services could save it. The Palikao Ministry, which succeeded that of M. Emile Ollivier, was called into existence by the majority of the Legislative Body, in order to try whether this salvation was possible. During the three weeks of its existence, the merits of men and institutions were discussed in France with the utmost freedom. The criticisms of the old adversaries of the Empire grew more audacious; a few devoted Imperialists demanded that those who denied the military capacity of the Emperor should be tried by court-martial; but soldiers, like Count Palikao, knew that the times were not auspicious for *coups d'état*. The people demanded arms for the defence of the nation. The Government replied by calling up firemen from the country towns, forest-guards, gendarmes, to reinforce the garrison of Paris. But why should France, which for many years had appropriated immense sums to the maintenance of an army, find herself hard pressed for troops two weeks after the opening of the campaign? This question

was much debated in France. A Special Correspondent of the *Daily News* thus reported a conversation which throws some light on this subject:—

I travelled from Paris to Boves with two rubicund cattle-dealers, who were returning home after having made good bargains in the threatened capital. They were stout, fair, florid men, with heavy whips, heavy jewellery, heavy purses, and evidently a capacity for heavy drinking. There was the bucolic heartiness in them; and we were soon deep in the war. One had sold three thousand sheep in the Paris market and sixty beasts. "They 'll not die of hunger," he said. "The stock is becoming enormous. They may come to their last cartridge and their last man, but not to their last biscuit, nor their last *bouillon*."—"Nor their last bœuf," the other interrupted, pointing with his thumb at his friend, to convey to me the knowledge that there were more oxen in his meadows than had yet been driven out of them. "But, Monsieur, we have a revenge to take; and, the war ended, we shall take it," continued the vendor of 3,000 sheep to beleaguered Paris. "France has been betrayed; France has been cheated. You remember that, fourteen or fifteen years ago, private offices, individual speculators, bought substitutes for the young men who were able to afford them. The price has risen since I drew lots, but this is not what we complain of. Everything has become dearer: human flesh, you see, as well as meat. Say the young man who has drawn an unlucky number doesn't wish to be a soldier. Well, his parents go to the Government office appointed within the last fifteen years for that purpose and pay, say, two thousand francs. Their dear boy is exonerated. Now, it is understood that with the two thousand francs a substitute, a *rempla-*

çant, shall be bought. This is the bargain between (1) the exonerated boy, (2) the Government, and (3) the nation." —"*Les voleurs!*" the cattle-dealer's friend interjected at this point.—"Well, what has been done? While the traffic in men was in the hands of private companies the Government took care to have their substitutes, since they had no interest in suppressing them. But, turned dealers themselves, their interest lay at once in a different direction. Well, they have just done this: taken the money from the pockets of families and put it into their own, and buttoned them carefully up. The substitute money has not bought a substitute. Just observe, monsieur, the effect of this. The right number of men have been put upon paper. To the public, who knew nothing of the dishonest transaction, the companies of our regiments were a hundred strong; and consequently the regiments, they believed, had each 3,000 men under the flag. But what was the actual truth? Why, I can give you any number of instances where the actual available men were not more than thirty to the company. Regiments that upon paper were at their full strength would barely muster 1,800 fighting men, and some even less than this. This is our defeat! This is the key to the disasters which redden the brow of every Frenchman. *Les gredins!*" The speaker wrenched the end of his cigar off with his teeth, folded his arms, glared, first at me and then at his friend, and asked what form of cruel punishment was severe enough for the rascals who had sold the honour of their country in this way. "They will pay dearly," said the other. "What is the result to us? Why, ruin. In my *pays* no less than twenty-two beetroot mills were to have been set in motion this year. They are built, they are ready, but we have no workmen, and no coals. The young men who were exonerated, and

who had drawn good numbers; who had, in short, settled to industrious lives, thinking that the State had no further military claims upon them, are drafted off, absolutely like *les moutons de monsieur!*"—"That is not all," said the sheep-dealer. "What kind of vermin have we been entertaining for the last year or two? We have had Prussians in France—all over France—for a year or two, even in our brave Picardy. Imagine this. An elegant gentleman—a German—took up his residence in my neighbourhood some eighteen months since. He made the acquaintance of the great seigneur of the locality, was asked to the château, and made love to the seigneur's daughter, and was only waiting till she had passed her sixteenth year to be married to her. I tell you he was a very accomplished person, and among his accomplishments sketching held a foremost place. He sketched the whole country; he measured every road. We are brave people, and never suspected him for a moment. Well, on the day war was declared he decamped, and neither the seigneur nor his daughter have heard of him since. He was, *tout bonnement*, a Prussian spy. Well, that scoundrel does not raise our bile half so much as the rascals who have made us a hundred or two thousand of paper soldiers, and put the money that should have bought fighting men in their pockets. But they will disgorge; and we shall hold them by the throat (the war over) until they have returned every *rouge liard*. The army know this, and in every regiment they are talking about it. It is the question that will be settled before any other directly we have got rid of the Prussians." The cattle-dealer's story has been repeated to me since by a military man, who had it direct from a Corps Législatif official. It is, indeed, the chief text of all military gossip.

In Paris the conviction was growing that France must save herself: and even before the Empire fell, the people, encouraged by General Trochu, Governor of the capital, were showing their desire to take up the work which was falling from the hands of their appointed military chiefs. In the middle of August, the Special Correspondent at Paris wrote :—

A spirit has sprung up which will render the war a war of patriotism. The word "peace" is the last word that will be listened to in Paris. The Parisians will fight first, and settle their domestic difficulties afterwards. I have talked to a varied set of residents on the subject, and I may say that, not day by day, but hour by hour, the determination to stand by Paris to the last becomes more intensified. But the people are pathetically ignorant of the situation of affairs outside the walls. They are driven to imagining all sorts of routes and strategical feats on the part of Bazaine and MacMahon. The cafés on the Boulevard des Italiens are crowded each evening with quidnuncs, who exchange specimens of the most profound geographical ignorance with each other. I heard a gentleman who was enjoying that French beverage, which, upon my word, I never saw a Frenchman taking before—a glass of cold water with a dash of sugar in it—bring a large group around his table by insisting that some Uhlans had got within the lines of the fortifications and had been captured. This, indeed, was an exceptional display of credulity, and was heard with numerous shrugs and interjections suggestive of disbelief. Spies and Uhlans are the ingredients with which most of the canards, or rather rocs, are stuffed.

I think by this time there ought to be provisions enough here to stand a very long siege indeed; but the cattle still continue to arrive, and vast quantities of flour pass

through the streets to the depôts every hour. Wherever you move you come across carts piled with luggage, many of the household goods being exhibited with a candour and an absence of vanity almost primitive. The horses attached to the vehicles are sorry, hollow-backed jades of a Wouvermans colour, and with the patient manner of broken-spirited donkeys. The men in charge are dusty and travel-stained, and there is always a dog and a bird-cage amongst the effects. The children must, I imagine, have been imported into the city in another set of ambulances, as I have not seen them with the van.

At the Porte Saint Martin Theatre we had a "représentation patriotique au benefice des Francs-tireurs," last evening. The Francs-tireurs are a popular and picturesque corps. Their Parisian friends and relatives flocked to the performance, which comprehended a couple of speeches from the stage, by two deputies, M. Cremieux and M. Esquiros. The programme of the night was of an intensely warlike character. Every seat was taken, and there was quite a cerulean belt or sky line of blouses in the region above the glowing pyramids of the gasêlier. Prices for places, indeed, rose to famine or fever height, and at about ten o'clock no room could be had. The audience heard with admirable patience a trifling play which preceded the "conference" on "Rouget de l'Isle et la Marseillaise," by M. Cremieux. The speaker made vigorous use of his text, and was listened to with the most profound attention and enthusiasm. His points were caught up instantly, and cheer after cheer greeted the bouquets of noble sentiments which he kept displaying, merely altering the arrangements, as it were, occasionally of the most familiar flowers of French rhetoric. He had by him the inevitable table and the glass of water, while in the background and at the side were standing hundreds of the Francs-tireurs, in whose interest the

exhibition was promoted. The orator was vehement, almost wild, in gesticulation. His voice ran through an octave of inflections; he wailed, he roared, he whispered, he nearly sang, he growled, he put on his tremulo stop; he seemed to pray, to weep, to denounce, and in every mood he was followed by the vast crowd, many of whose faces grew white with excitement and eager suspense. When he concludes the applause is deafening, there is a hoarse simultaneous roar from every side, and the Francs-tireurs rush forward to salute the worthy little gentleman, who seems not a whit the worse for his exhausting oration. He is summoned forth like a prima donna, to receive the compliment of a second reception. And now the "Marseillaise," embodied in the person of Mdlle. Agar, appears to give illustrative effect to the "conference." She is admirably fitted by nature and by art for the *rôle*. Her forehead is low and broad, her eyes black, her hair is dark and loose, her bare arms shapely, though somewhat muscular; she moves in a crouching, tiger-like attitude; she is hoarse, as though choking with passion. In a white dress, she stoops and glides to the footlights, and commences her chant as though she were a Brocken witch, murmuring an unhallowed incantation. The blouses aloft are still as mice, a warning *hush-h* stifles a solitary chatterer in the stalls. Every line is dwelt on with an emphasis which would be grotesque in its exaggeration but for the terrible and oppressive earnestness with which each syllable is listened to. We come to a climax when the tricolour is unfurled, and Mdlle. kneels down, and the Francs-tireurs kneel also, and the audience rise. At the close of the song Mdlle. is recalled, and is accompanied by a Franc-tireur, who holds her by the hand, with a bow sufficiently expressive of his and his comrades' resolve to live or die for the nation. Another warlike

solo is delivered by a gentleman who is a trifle too fat to produce unmixed emotions, and whose rotund build is rendered over-palpable by a pair of yellow tight drawers worn below a short jacket. We have a tender ditty by a young lady and gentleman, who quaver and quiver in that sigh-away, die-away fashion which belongs to the school of French drawing-room music, corresponding with our own boudoir ballads of amorous desolation and despair, necessitating the expression of a desire to be a bird or a butterfly. A piece of declamation by Mdlle. Agar on "Liberté," and we conclude with "Le Chœur des Enfants de Lutéce, par tous les Artistes de la Porte St. Martin." During an interval there was a collection for the Francs-tireurs. Ladies and gentlemen assisted in sending round the hat. I witnessed an agreeable incident during this ceremony. A young officer was seated next a very pretty girl, and one of his superiors having to cross where he was, I observed the latter shake his head at him and point to a sword, which I presumed the other had not permission to wear in public. The young fellow immediately unbuckled his belt and handed the weapon to his chief, who, after apparently addressing a remonstrance to him, turned with a smile to the lady, and gave the sword into her custody. When I was leaving the theatre I perceived that the Francs-tireurs had already provided themselves with a daughter of the regiment. The vivandière was youthful and comely, albeit Rubenesque in proportions. She was surrounded by an admiring and respectful crowd, and did not appear in the least embarrassed by the curiosity she evidently excited. I should back her in a bout of fisticuffs against four at least of her male body-guards, though her mild blue eyes would seem to warrant her free from a disposition to blacken those of any one else.

The younger the soldier, the more thoroughly he takes

to the trade. If I have seen two drill detachments, I have seen a score, in the best of spirits, following the tuck-tuck and rattle of the monotonous drum, bearing their kit on their backs and a yard or so of bread. One entire brigade seemed to be armed with nothing more destructive than tin pots and kettles for cooking. The streets are perpetually traversed by waggons freighted with flour. Along the Boulevard you see the red trousers everywhere. When a pair of comrades settle at a little marble slab they are instantly surrounded by waiters, with whom they shake hands, and to whom they exhibit their garb and accoutrements, with the vanity of a belle turning herself round and round to her maid-servants when she has put on her war-paint and her spangles for a *soirée dansante*. The waiters fold their arms and adopt military attitudes, while the recruits relate their experiences, which may include a period of three or four days. They drink a glass of beer and tender payment, but the dame at the counter inside signals that the refreshment is to be an act of unregistered hospitality. It is pleasant to observe the natural and self-respecting etiquette with which our recruits acknowledge the good nature of their entertainers, and the easy mode in which they and the waiters all bow to each other. I am afraid our countrymen under the same circumstances would behave much as a bear does when you give him a bun. By the way, I have seen Turcos, or what I believe to be such; and it strikes me, if I can be permitted to draw a conclusion from slight data, that these imported forces are not universally the Sawney Beans that we have been told they were. Perhaps, however, French Turcos are now being manufactured to replace those cut off by the needle-guns of the Prussians. At any rate, the turbaned group that I met to-day were as mild in demeanour and in visage as orthodox curates.

Judging from the gusto with which they fell upon rolls of bread and cups of coffee, I am inclined to think that their palates have never been stimulated by unhallowed meats.

Preparations for a siege began in earnest, even while MacMahon was leading his Army of the North to rescue Bazaine. Late in August the Special Correspondent just quoted wrote:—

The Napoleonic pillar in the Place Vendôme, the Bridge of Jena, and the Arch of Triumph—such are the sacrifices the terrible Prussians are certain to demand. These glorious trophies rankle—so runs the story—in the German heart, and the cry "to Paris" is prompted by a fierce desire to destroy the monuments of past victory and defeat. But they shall stand, look you, until long after the present march on Paris has been forgotten, and our grandchildren's grandchildren shall talk of the honours gained by Paris at bay. To the Arch of Triumph first. What do you see on the way? What do you see amid the trees of Boulogne and the plain of Longchamps? What on the long road of the Elysian Fields, and on the diverging highways to the west, south, and north? Carriages, vans, waggons, carts, wheelbarrows, trays on wheels, all laden with household goods, all accompanied by their homeless owners, all testifying to the reality of the defence Paris is prepared to make. You meet the stream at the Madeleine, and it is all but unbroken during a two hours' drive. A long Normandy cart, drawn by clumsy broad-backed farm-house steeds, who neigh and caper at city sights and sounds—a cart laden with human freight as well as with beds and bedding, chairs, tables, faded bits of work in Berlin wool framed and glazed, a birdcage or two, and a pet dog, meets you first. An old crone is perched at a dangerous height on a paillasse of blue and

white, little children cling to the dusty shafts, while men and women are walking in a melancholy procession at its side. Then a private omnibus with a coronet on its varnished sides, its windows down, and its blinds drawn, but with rare old china monsters peeping from its half-open door, and a jumble of ormolu, statuettes, bronzes, cabinet pictures, and ornate time-pieces presenting itself within. An open cab with a pyramid of bonnet-boxes and feminine trunks, in the midst of which a vestal of sour exterior is squatted; a barouche and pair, on the seats of which are dressing-cases, and a gilt cage with a squalling macaw; two vans, containing between them the furniture of a good-sized house; a ramshackle nondescript on wheels drawn by a mule, and with the heterogeneous contents of a broker's shop emptied into it, in as much confusion as if they had been shaken from a pepper-castor by giant hands; a little crowd on foot, which is like a funeral, save that the bearers are in blue linen instead of black cloth, and that they surround a brightly polished mahogany wardrobe instead of a coffin, meet the eye in succession. It is the flight into Paris. The houses for miles round the fortifications are deserted, and their recent occupants are flocking to within the walls by the hundred with their chattels and their families, there to await the result of the enemy's advance. It seems a peculiar mode of preparing for a siege, this accumulation in the threatened city of useless mouths; but they feel safer, these poor people, to be at the capital than to retreat into the provinces, and the Government has not hitherto said them nay. Down the main avenue of the Elysian Fields, past the Arch of Triumph, on the summit of which there are soldiers taking observations, and a crane and a movable platform mysteriously at work; along the roads skirted by the cottages with double coach-houses, by the wicked little architectural pretti-

nesses in stucco, from whose gates dainty white poodles with pink collars are wont to peep, and by the pretentious villas of detached gentility, and we are at the gates of the famous Bois. Nothing but families moving, and closed houses all the way. Let the reader recall the time when he suffered last from the horrors of "a move," and then let him multiply the vehicles containing his household goods until they cover three miles of ground, and he will realize what has taken place for the last forty-eight hours at the outskirts of, and the main roads into, Paris. It is only when we are through the first line of fortifications that the houses are closed. Within this limit the various shops are rather busier than usual. You must eat and drink, however great your distress, and on the sad day when the best and most beloved among us depart this life, the cook will assuredly take her orders for dinner exactly as if the mournful event had not occurred. So the eating-houses and wine-shops are driving a roaring trade by reason of the extra traffic, and the heads of small households, and the owners of deserted farms, chat together not uncheerfully over the refreshing glass. They talk of the fineness of the weather for their job, and the heaviness of the roads. It is impossible to be dying for your country all day long, and the necessity for a removal, and its distressing inconvenience and loss, having been once admitted, there is no philosophy in railing at the Prussians instead of getting out of their way. The tradespeople near the barriers are as chirpy as possible. A small fat *flâneur* discourses on the absurdity of supposing that the Prussians will come, or that they are such fools, and then holding his stomach at the convulsing excellence of the jest, asks if we have seen the cattle and sheep in the gardens of the Bois? "There are more thousands of them than I can count; there is enough meat for all of

us for two months; there is no bit of ground in the whole place which has not its beasts feeding. It is droll this, it is droll. Look at them; thus they come still, the carriages with the women, the children, and the men, the beds and the chairs, and all to ask Paris to protect them—my faith, from what?" The little man blows away some snuff from his forefinger with great contempt, and having thus disposed of the enemy satisfactorily, turns to his quips and jests again, to the puzzlement and dismay of his listeners, who are half-persuaded that they have taken fright too soon. It is as well for that merry little man that he is not within earshot of the people who suspect and denounce, or his merriment might take the incongruous form of a mingled prayer for mercy and a pitiful avowal that he is French to the heart's core, and hating Prussia with all his might.

We have been indebted to a block of half an hour at the fortifications gate for this conversation. The trench round the works has been deepened, and the opening in the walls closed up, all but a narrow space which a single line of vehicles can pass. At our arrival it is the turn of those coming in, and our carriage is stopped amid a mass of others. There are enormous waggon-loads of hay, bound for the outlying forts, soldiers on horseback, gendarmes, commissariat waggons, and a field-piece or two waiting with us. At a given signal from a sergent de ville, the tide of arrival is turned, and we who are waiting are permitted egress. There are looks of curious scrutiny as we pass the fortification walls, and the odd-looking men whose cab has kept close by ours ever since we made for the Bois, draw closer. But we neither put questions nor make a parade of observation, and when our drive brings us to the iron gates of the noble enclosure we ask indifferently of the men on guard there if it is still allowed to drive

in the Bois, and are at once admitted. The woods and gardens, the racecourse at Longchamps, and the meadows around it present an extraordinary spectacle. Horned animals tear down the boughs of trees, and munch up choice leaves and flowers, and roll massively over parterre and shrub, reckless of consequences, and as if asking each other what the deuce this unwonted liberty can mean. Twenty-seven thousand head of cattle make a pretty show in a wood, the boughs and leafy shadows of which have an oddly magnifying effect. Turn which way we would, there were gigantic animals tearing at the trees, or browsing peacefully at their feet, and the effect was exactly as if they were in a state of nature. The sheep were less picturesque, but quite as extraordinary. There seemed miles of them. The plain of the racecourse was like a field of waving corn from the mass of moving yellow wool with which it was covered, and now and again when the thick foliage broke, and we came to open meadows full of cattle, it was exactly as if a boldly-mottled mass of red and white marble had been enclosed. The dun, red, and white of the cattle were amalgamated, and they were so closely packed that it seemed as if you could walk upon their backs as on a level floor. So all through the avenues in which the beauty, the fashion, and the frivolity of the world have foregathered these many years. Beasts rambling among the trees and flowers, soldiers in uniform washing their feet in the lake of the cascade, and other soldiers defiling up the walks and groves, and that was all. It was not merely that the customary flirtations, costumes, and equipages were wanting. There was complete solitude, save for the things described. Our carriage was the only one to be seen, and the people at the café by the cascade resented as an outrage our request for breakfast. A waiter stood at the door, nap-

kin in hand, the little tables had glass and snowy linen, and there were attendants behind the counter. But it was all phantom-like and ghostly. They were bewildered, stunned, appalled at the prospect before them and the sights at their door, and the waiter ran away the instant we addressed him. On the patch of green in front of the café, from which a Clothilde and Therèse have flaunted and ogled for many a season, a poor sheep lay dying; the tramp of common soldiers resounded in the favourite walks of the Arcadian exquisites of the Second Empire, and the line of fortifications just visible in the distance, instead of contributing an ornamental adjunct to the landscape, has had its archways turned into storehouses for grain. The stream of carts and carriages laden with families and furniture was as thick as ever on our return, and the number of "useless mouths" which have entered Paris since yesterday morning must be immense. On the other hand, twenty thousand souls have left it in the same time, and the railway stations are blocked up by the anxious people who are burning to be off. Deserted houses for miles round the city, and deserted houses by the thousand within it, citizens vowing that they will never desert the entrenchments, and that they will die rather than the Prussians shall enter the capital; preparations for a siege, which is calmly anticipated as of two months' duration, and so announced in the journals of the day; wayfarers, with determined faces, telling each other of the latest order as to the expulsion of the Germans, and of their own determination to fight to the last—this is Paris. This driving in of cattle, this storing of food, and this clustering together of poor families eager for protection, gives a strange vividness to the preparations for armed defence, and makes us feel in a state of siege indeed.

Just after the battle of Vionville the following letter was written by the Special Correspondent at Paris:—

Marshal Bazaine's "victory" did not at first alter the face of Paris a jot. I was sitting outside the Café Americain half an hour after midnight this morning, when an animated gentleman alighted from a cab, and burst upon us with the news. He had seen it at the Minister's. He knew it to be true. It was a great, an enormous victory, with thousands of Prussians slain, and thousands more wounded on the field. The young men in uniform, and the male and female loungers, clustered round him on the instant, and immediately began to cavil. "It is not official."—"How do we know it to be a victory?"—"Why is not the despatch up at the Mairie?" were the only expressions vouchsafed, and neither belief in the news, nor gratitude to the newsmonger, were visible. It was quite in vain that our informant protested and pledged himself. A tall cynic in a white hat shrugged his shoulders and said, "But no!" after each asseveration, and the crowd leant to scepticism rather than faith. A little later, and the despatch was put up at the Mairie in the Rue Druot and other places, and a vast assemblage discussed it publicly. The absence of rejoicing was very remarkable. I suppose it would have been too much to have looked for a cheer, but the clapping of hands lacked heartiness, and men began to argue as to the truth and scope of the intelligence almost in the same breath as that in which they read it out. The news soon spread. But in every case doubt and disputation went hand in hand with its receipt, and it really seemed as if the city could not bring itself to believe that it had occasion to rejoice.

The mothers, the sisters, the wives, the affianced of the gallant young spirits who have donned their uniforms and

marched so blithely to the battle, how do these bear up in their day of heavy trial? Come with me to the Church of our Lady of Victory, and you shall see them humble, devout, patient, praying for their dear ones, and registering their vows before Heaven. The whole church is full of memorials from those who have suffered and have prayed, whose heart's hunger has been mercifully satisfied, and who have inscribed their gratitude on the sacred walls. I was at this church on the Napoleon Fête-day, and again this morning. It had many worshippers on both occasions, tearful women rapt in prayer for the most part, with here and there a priest and an aged man. "In gratitude to Our Lady for preserving a darling child when in great peril;" and then come initials and the date. "In humble thankfulness for the return of my beloved husband from the war;" "Honour to Our Lady for her merciful intervention," on a day named. "In acknowledgment of the prayer Our Lady answered," and so forth, cover a great part of the interior of the church. Each sentiment is graven on a small marble tablet some eight inches by four, and affixed to the walls, or the pillars overhead, so that the place is lined with the records of gratitude. Several of these are too minutely personal for quotation, but all breathe the same spirit, and all helped to give a tender meaning to the bowed figures absorbed in prayer. There were lighted candles and pictures, an officiating priest in vestments, and glittering altar ornaments, and votive offerings. But you hardly see these. The poor women and their sorrows shut them out. Theirs are the passionate cravings for more than human help; the pitiful longing for other and more personal solace than the most brilliant national victory could give; the humble shrinking domestic hopes and fears which centre upon Jules or Antoine, his safety and his life. He is perhaps

lying stiff and stark with a Prussian bullet through his head even as they pray, but they are upheld, poor souls, by love and faith; they deposit their little gifts in one of the bags held by ladies at the church's doors, and go their way serene and comforted. The tumbrils yesterday, for the men about to be wounded, and the church in which prayers for soldiers' safety are being offered up to-day—it is hard to say which was sadder. There were no heroines present, and I did not see a single worshipper who seemed capable of playing the Roman. It was all humility and timid hope; and when one looked round next at the vacant places for the tablets of gratitude, it was with strengthened convictions concerning the horrible barbarism—the relentless wickedness of war.

The shopkeeping interests are suffering terribly from the state of siege. There are no tourists to buy pretty trifles at exorbitant prices. The Rue de Rivoli, the Rue de la Paix, the Rue Royale, and the Rue Castiglione are monuments of emptiness. You pass shop after shop at what used to be the busiest hours in the day, to find Mr. the Proprietor in solitary dignity, on one of his customers' chairs, or Mr. the Shopwalker looking disconsolately from the door. In no case are customers to be seen. The establishment of the great Worth had not a single carriage before it this afternoon, and the jewellers, the bric-à-brac vendors, the milliners, were living in hermit-like retirement behind their wares, and came forth lugubriously, but with feverish briskness, if your shadow so much as fell across their thresholds. Let affairs progress in their present direction, and it will be worth a resolute and courageous bargain-hunter's while to run all risks and to come over. "There is no money," the traders say; "we have good reason for wishing to reduce our stock. You shall have this picture or that gem at half—at half, do I say?—at your own price.

What think you of this as a season for travellers? one had far better shut up and go to the frontier!" Then come bitter imprecations upon the "light-heartedness" with which this paralyzing war was entered upon, and dismal stories of the impossibility of a commercial rebound for many a long month to come. This is a prosaic side of the national calamity, but it is very real and very apparent. People have something else to think of besides shopping, and it is, moreover, held to be rather against you to be possessed of the wherewithal for purchases. A portly Frenchman found this out the other day. He seemed to uninitiated eyes a true Parisian, and his patent boots, broad-tailed cutaway coat, tight girths, and general suggestiveness of straps, pads, and buckles under his clothes, together with the pretty toy-dog carried by the lady at his side, certainly placed his nationality beyond doubt. Yet his appearance and conduct were declared to be gravely suspicious when he tendered a thousand-franc note and asked for change, after taking some refreshment. In less than two minutes he found himself the centre of an unpleasantly animated crowd. How came he with so much money on his person? What account could he render of himself? From the provinces—a merchant? His name, his age, his papers? He was not ill-treated, for he was able to satisfy his querists; but he and the lady with him spent a marvellously uncomfortable quarter of an hour, and when he was suffered to depart there was quite a debate concerning the probability of his having come honestly by the note, and whether it might not have come from Prussia. The preposterous unreason of this thesis struck no one. The garçon was seen to go for the landlord, and the landlord was observed with two other garçons to advance to the stranger. After this, those sitting near the latter were on their feet upon the instant, volunteering opinions

and advice. Then the next rank of customers advanced, and the next, and the next, until the poor man was like St. Paul at Ephesus, or the "too daring" Hector of Troy. It is melancholy to add, that his lady companion turned against him too, and with an "I told you so" expression rated him soundly for his folly in not bringing out small change, and so saving her from the annoyance his thoughtless conduct had brought about. Altogether that middle-aged French dandy had a bad time, and when he hailed a cab and drove off, it was with the cowed look of a man who has been found not guilty, but recommended not to commit the offence again.

The mania for finding spies everywhere was greatly encouraged by the ridiculous stories published in the newspapers. It was related how a man, who was vending a halfpenny "true and correct life of the brave General Uhrich, the defender of Strasburg," turned out to be a Prussian, and how a Berliner had gone up and down Paris for a fortnight taking note of every new-built work or palisade in the guise of a French officer. An adventure with a professional denouncer of spies was described in the following letter from the Special Correspondent at Paris:—

Messieurs les Mouchards have turned me out of my hotel. Not violently, but with a gentle and consistent pressure more effective than violence. They "wanted to know" about me. They followed me through the town. When I dined, one of them turned up at an adjoining table. When I drove, another of them was seized with a passion for taking the air. When I loitered at shop windows, they loitered too; when I called on friends, they stood obligingly at the corner of the street. When I was busy with my letters, they held conferences as to what I could positively have to write about. All this was because the Prussian landlord had seemed glad to see me when I

arrived three days since. This horribly suspicious circumstance appears to have given the authorities great anxiety; and when I learnt that, in addition to their flattering personal attentions, they were curious as to my correspondence, and as to the particular post-office through which it was sent, I resolved to move. "Your letters won't leave this country without being read by the Government," remarked the German *valet de place* whom I had engaged on the recommendation of my Prussian landlord. "Ask the gentleman you serve, they say to me—the gentleman who writes—whether you will have to leave France or not. He knows all about it—pah! why do you pretend? He knows—we tell you, he knows. The French garçon, sir, who looks to your room, is, I believe, a *mouchard;* there is another *mouchard* on the steps of the hotel; and see! over there by the book-shop window, that fat man in black, with the white face, he is a *mouchard* too, and will keep opposite this house till you go out."

But all this was as nothing to my latest experience. I have now left the Prussian's hotel thirty-six hours; but on calling there this morning for my letters, I found to my amazement the same fat man standing at the same book-shop window. Our eyes met as I left the hotel, and as I made my way down to the Paris fruit market he followed me. Once at the latter, I halted. So did the *mouchard,* and I had now an opportunity of examining him well. A man of thirty-five or so, with that premature tendency to stomach which a diet of sugar and grease gives—a man dressed in black, with a good deal of shirt front sticking out at the breast, like the feathers of a pouter pigeon, and with a curly-brimmed hat, and gloves, forsooth (gloves of the kind called "Berlin," doubtless to blind me, the Prussian), and, joy of joys, with tender feet! I knew this by his boots, which were creasy, large, and splay-footed, as full of marks and lines as an outline map of

Europe, and with a Black Sea in the shape of a neat hole over the toe of the right one, nicely filled out with black silk. It was clear he did not wish to speak with or denounce me, or he would have done it now. It was clear, too, he meant to keep me in sight. So, always with an eye to the condition of his feet, I resolved to lead that *mouchard* a dance. I had had the best of the situation so far; for, whereas I ate delicious peaches, and figs worthy of Jersey, he, poor fellow, had contented himself with cheapening grapes of a peculiarly mouldy character. The morning was agreeable, and I was lightly clad, so, after eating my last peach with great deliberation, washing my hands at the market fountain, and figuratively girding up my loins, I started for a constitutional round the Parc de Monceaux. The day was before me, you understand, and a good four-miles-an-hour walk was rather agreeable than otherwise. Off we started, therefore—I and my police shadow—I keeping up a steady heel-and-toe pace, he shambling painfully, but beating me by knowledge of the road, and by artfully availing himself of short cuts. To do him justice, he stuck to his work bravely. Twenty times in the course of that two hours' ramble did I think I had shaken him off, and twenty times did he come up smiling, though considerably the worse for wear. He puffed like a steam-engine out of order. His feet bothered him, and I was puzzled that he did not hire a cab. Could it be that "payments by results" is the system in vogue here, and that without a conviction his expenses would not be allowed? He became a touching spectacle at last, perspiring, uneasy, almost groaning. Still, he kept on my trail doggedly. Never say there is no perseverance in the French character. This fat knave has eradicated that theory from my mind for ever. I tried hard to walk him out. Round by the Pantheon, past the Elysée, where the old soldiers were being enrolled as volunteers

by the hundred, and where there was a considerable crowd, but where he neither lingered nor spoke, down by the fruit markets again, and so to Nôtre Dame. For I had determined to mount the towers of that venerable edifice, and to give my *mouchard* a final breather up the stone steps. He threw up the sponge at the narrow doorway leading to the towers, sat down breathlessly on the steps of the Hôtel Dieu, and left me to make the ascent alone. You don't, of course, go through this kind of amusement without warming to the work, as it were. I had my pockets full of the English newspapers of yesterday, a pipe (of which more anon), lights, and a good supply of tobacco. So I climbed to the topmost height, selected a snug corner out of the wind, and composed myself for a long stay. I found the newspapers interesting and the tobacco delicious. The guardian of the place leaves you after showing the bells on the story below, and retires to his rabbit hutch on the roof while you pant up the remaining flight of stone steps alone. There was something so exceedingly comic in the situation that I got almost to pity my pursuer, as I pictured him nursing his poor swollen feet below, while I enjoyed the magnificent panorama and listened philosophically to the war-sounds of the city.

The whole thing seemed so childishly unreal. Yonder drab strip is, I suppose, a road. Those blue toy figures, about the size of one's thumb, and with a tiny map-flag in their midst, who are being pushed along it in compact masses, as if by some clever mechanism, are a regiment of soldiers *en route* for the field. The pigmies in blouses on the opposite side of the Seine, whose chant of the "Marseillaise" comes up clear and strong to my perch, are conscripts. Those stumpy brown cigars being dragged along by white and brown insects, are casks of wine by the waggonful; the black pins with white

heads which perambulate the green pocket-handkerchief with brown stripes immediately below me, are convalescents in the gardens of the Hôtel Dieu; and yonder doll's chapel on the baby bridge, with male and female worshippers constantly going in and out, is the Morgue. I have finished my newspapers by this time, and have spent an hour and a quarter on the tower. I descend to find my *mouchard* still in waiting. He looks surprised to see me, much as if he had determined that I had taken up a permanent residence in the Sebastopol bell there, to concoct conspiracies against the State. I make for the Morgue at a brisk pace; he keeps on the bridge while I enter, is gone when I leave it, and I have not seen him since. Let us hope that his report to-day will make an instructive addition to the police archives.

I had heard that there had been thrice the number of suicides in Paris since the war than previously, but the statement was not borne out by what I saw in the city's dead-house. A decent-looking woman of fifty, in a white Normandy cap, and holding her son, a lad of ten, by the hand, expressed this tersely, and with a great air of disappointment—"There is nothing new." She remarked, the instant she passed the door-way, "He was here yesterday, and the day before, and the day before that. Come, my child, let us not stay." "He" was a man of sixty, with an iron-grey beard, shrunken limbs, and a careworn pinched-up face, out of which Death itself had not been able to smooth away the wrinkles and crow's-feet, each of which told its story of sordid suffering. "He" had died, or killed himself, when in bitter penury, as the rags hanging over his head for identification showed. As the water fell drip, drip, on the rigid mask of clay, and the shouts of the tipsy patriots floated in, its late owner seemed far removed indeed from war and political crises, their fever and their turmoil. As for me,

I remembered Eöthen, and thought the old man well out of the scrape of being alive and poor. This dead pauper is merely a parenthesis, however. The event of the morning was the *mouchard* and his stern chase. I have taken the opinion of experienced friends since my return, and it is agreed, that incidents like these are part of the programme in a state of siege, that it is no more than any foreigner is liable to, be he English or otherwise, and that nothing can be done unless one is annoyed by some overt act.

The city has been far quieter for the last two days (August 14 and 15). It is unnecessary to add that this surface-calm does not imply content. Such violent fevers as Paris was suffering from at the beginning of the week, are the more dangerous when they strike inwards, and there are ample indications that public feeling is suppressed, not allayed. The wildest stories are abroad. Last night, when the Marines—whose loyalty to the Empire is supposed to have been kept fresh in a saline atmosphere—were marched down the Boulevards on their way to the field, they were followed by the acclamations of thousands. Bouquets were fixed to muskets and carried in triumph. One old gentleman, with a red ribbon in his button-hole, distributed largesse, standing up in his carriage and constantly bringing silver from an apparently inexhaustible canvas bag. But the cries were *Vive les Marines! Vive les Parisiens!* and occasionally *Vive la Guerre!* As for the Emperor, none were so poor as to do him reverence—no man cried, "God bless him." In one of the recent telegraphic despatches from the seat of war, it was said that rain was falling heavily at Metz, and the Marines were asked jestingly if they could teach the generals to fight without umbrellas. A good many of the gallant fellows were drunk, and the large loaves of coarse bread were stuck on their rifles as if the latter

were toasting-forks, and so waved in triumph at the bystanders. All these uncovered to the Marines, and the latter brandished their arms, stopped to shake hands with, and in some instances kiss, perfect strangers in a free-and-easy fashion, such as would turn an English disciplinarian's brain. Sitting outside the Café de la Paix yesterday, a lad of twenty, in uniform, and with a most doleful face, came up with a handsomely-coloured meerschaum and a sad story. It was his brother's pipe. It had been his brother's pride to watch its progress, and to show to an admiring circle how its white gave way to a creamy yellow, its yellow to a delicate chocolate, and its chocolate to a rich brown. But this brother went to the wars, and left the pipe in the speaker's hands, charging him solemnly to smoke slowly, and to preserve and foster the pipe's growing beauties, against its owner's return. Now, the brother is dead, and the holder of the pipe had been "drawn." He was starting for Châlons that night. He was afraid of taking so fine a pipe with him. He would dread its falling into the hands of the Prussians, it might be taken from him on the field, and would the gentlemen buy it at their own price? Need I add that it changed hands, and that the poor lad in uniform went on his way, not rejoicing—he was too profoundly dejected for that—but with one of his cares assuaged. The damaging stories mentioned in my last are repeated everywhere. The malversation of stores, the rottenness of the Administration, the incompetence of the Emperor to lead armies or to continue personal government, are all accepted as foregone conclusions, and it really seems as if very few people indeed believe that there will be any serious attempt to continue or prolong the old state of affairs. All this can wait, they say. Give us news of the war. Let us be satisfied that Paris is safe, and that France's honour can be redeemed, and

we can settle such a minor matter as our next form of Government later. Meanwhile strenuous efforts are, it is said, being made to repair the condition of the army, its equipment, and commissariat, and every day's delay before the next great battle is said to be worth twenty thousand men to France. The actual state of affairs in Paris may be inferred from my personal experience this morning, as well as from the facts that the fair city is almost surprisingly peaceable and quiet; and that I saw the sergents de ville disperse two crowds last night without opposition or difficulty. They left several other street assemblages untouched, but three days ago they seemed to have abnegated their functions and never to interfere at all.

A word concerning the "Marseillaise." It has lost its effect. I have heard it sung at two different places of public entertainment with all the pomp and circumstance which good singing, good acting, good music, and abundant banners and supernumeraries could give to it, and it fell as flatly as a bad sermon. In the first instance there were three singers on the stage, the chief of whom was dressed as one of the soldiers of the Revolution of '93, cocked hat, red lappels, and sword complete. He waved a tricoloured banner, and sang, and knelt, and invoked with admirable enthusiasm. His companions, one in the uniform of a Chasseur de Vincennes, and the other a youth in the Garde Mobile dress of to-day, also waved tricoloured flags, and knelt, and made the solemnly patriotic appeals which three short weeks ago stirred the average Frenchman into frenzy. But it was like whipping a dead horse. The audience seemed dead or stunned, and sipped their liquor calmly, or chatted in under tones, as if they thought the great national song were *malapropos*, or as if they had not the heart to join in it under present circumstances. This was at the Café des Ambassadeurs,

in the Champs Elysées, where the "Marseillaise" is put forward as one of the attractions of the evening, the hour at which it is sung advertised beforehand, and the people supposed to flock to hear it with all their might. The Alcazar d'Eté is but a stone's throw from it, and gives its version of the "Marseillaise" with even greater elaboration. There are some fifty singers on the stage, men dressed in most revolutionary blouses and armed with guns and bayonets, women dressed as street lads waving tricoloured banners, and women as patriotic heroines with not much dress to speak of. These joined in the great chorus, and tried hard to stir the hearts of their auditors. All in vain. The seats at each place were only a fourth filled, and the people occupying them seemed half asleep. One stout gentleman essayed to lead a chorus, but the attempt was a failure, and as he subsided into hiccups before the song was over, his enthusiasm was neither effective nor contagious.

CHAPTER VII.

THE Emperor could not return to Paris, leaving Bazaine shut up in Metz. *That* had been explicitly announced to him by his Ministers and his consort as soon as he had disclosed an inclination to resume in the capital the duties of the position in which he had so lately been confirmed by the nation. More than that, the army of MacMahon must not remain at Châlons, but proceed to succour Marshal Bazaine. MacMahon remonstrated. The movement upon Metz he declared would be a measure of the "greatest imprudence," and he was not willing to expose troops, still imperfectly organzied, in making an extremely perilous flank march in the face of an enemy very superior in point of numbers. He announced, accordingly, that he was going to make his way towards Rheims, whence he could proceed either to Soissons or to Paris. "It is only," said he, "under the walls of the capital that my army, when rested and reconstituted, will be able to offer the enemy any serious resistance." In pursuance of this resolution, the army was led towards Rheims on the 21st, and took up its position behind that city. "But the language of reason"—the Emperor subsequently complained—"was not understood in Paris; it was wished, at all hazards, to give public opinion the empty hope that Marshal Bazaine could still be succoured, and the Duke of Magenta received from the Council of Ministers, to which had been joined the Privy Council and the Presidents of the two Chambers, a

most pressing injunction to march towards Metz." The army which was thus embarked on a highly perilous enterprise was made up of the most various elements. Its nucleus was formed of the remains of MacMahon's First Corps—veterans who had fought in Africa, and were assumed to be the very flower of the French army; yet their chief has since told us that they were "discouraged and mutinous," and the effects of their dire example were feared. The Fifth Corps, that of De Failly, had lost its baggage in a long retreat, without having once met the enemy. Douay's Seventh Corps "did not show so much solidity as might have been desired." The Twelfth, a new Army Corps, was composed of three divisions—the first formed of new regiments, the second made up of "marching regiments," out of "fourth battalions," and the third of Marines. Obeying the orders which he had deprecated, MacMahon led his army, on the 23rd, from Rheims for Bethenville, on the Suippe. Its departure from the former city was marked by deplorable excesses. The soldiers, neither attached to their officers by respect, nor fairly subjected to them by discipline, plundered the provision and other trains in the most open manner, and, worst of all, no notice could be taken of their disgraceful conduct. Scarcely had MacMahon left Rheims when want of necessaries compelled him to return to the railway, and he reached Rethel on the 24th, from the sheer necessity of obtaining subsistence for his men. At Rethel, the road to be taken to Metz must be definitively secured and boldly pursued.

The Prussian commander had taken precautions for every contingency. His own arrangement had primarily in view a march upon Châlons and Paris, to be prosecuted by two armies, while Metz was to be guarded by the united forces of two others. The Crown Prince of Prussia was to resume his suspended march along the great road from Nancy to Châlons. It was possible, how-

ever, that MacMahon might take up a defensive position to the north of Châlons. To meet such a contingeney, a Fourth Army was formed, of the Prussian Guards, the 12th and 4th Corps—in all 80,000—and placed under the command of the Crown Prince of Saxony. On the 22nd, four days after the battle of Gravelotte, this army was on its westward march by Verdun and Menehould to Châlons. Having made these arrangements, the King went to Ligny, to join his son, the Crown Prince. His arrival was described in the following letter from the Special Correspondent, with the Third Army, dated Ligny, August 24:—

This is a great day in the campaign of the Third Army of Germany. His Majesty the King of Prussia has arrived at head-quarters, attended by General von Moltke, and the streets of Ligny have been choked with Bavarian troops from early morning until late in the afternoon. They have had a busy day in Ligny. The columns have gone by in a ceaseless stream, with loud trumpet notes and with a constant roll of drums. Regiment after regiment of infantry has tramped past my window, battery after battery of field-guns has rumbled slowly along, and the shrill cavalry trumpets have filled the town with their clangour. The scene in the public square has been one of the most crowded and warlike that you can well imagine. Oxen brought for food, horses and waggons, have been jumbled together in apparently hopeless confusion. The brass bands have been heard at the end of the street, have come nearer and nearer, and have gone proudly by with swelling strains of triumph. Now we have seen cattle led behind the regiments, now groups of men with litters for the wounded, or waggon-loads of cartridges for the breech-loaders. Even as I write the movement still continues. There is a murmur of voices like a mighty stream, and

a clatter of hoofs like the same stream foaming over rocks. More waggons. They are actually at a trot, and yet the road is not cleared. If this be a single *corps d'armée*, what must be that whole district alive with soldiers, which represents the invasion of France in 1870? I can well understand the expression of an old general officer in the Prussian service, who said not long since, when some one spoke of bringing 30,000 more men into the field, "Thirty thousand more? why, we should not have room for them to manœuvre!" The Germans have made such an effort, and put so large a force into the field, that they are not an army, but a nation under arms.

It is curious to hear the old folks hereabouts speak of the great war of 1815. They can remember the Allied Sovereigns at Ligny in that memorable year, and tell how a grand review was held upon the plateau to the east of the town. Talk of King William as a stranger, and they will recount his arrival here with the invaders of fifty-five years ago. Ask them about the antiquities of their neighbourhood, and they will show you the house where the Allied Sovereigns were quartered in that bygone campaign. Yet there is something to be seen of greater relative antiquity. The ruined castle by the waterside is a fine fragment of the middle ages. It was used as a local prison or place of detention for short terms until eighteen months ago—I can only say that I am glad I was not detained here—and it is still habitable in a few of its rooms. There is a good view from the top of the tower of the town and the surrounding hills. The road can be seen winding down from the eastward between the fruitful vineyards, and stretching away over the more level ground to the westward, flanked by poplar trees, as a genuine French *chaussée* ought to be. Beside the road is the canal, where great

barges lie idle in this troublous time, and farther on, at a little distance from Ligny, is the station of the Paris and Strasburg Railway. We are only 232 kilometres from Paris—about 137 miles—and if there should be really an undisturbed occupation of Chlâons, the plot will become very thick indeed. Those regiments and batteries which have been all day filing past the Crown Prince's quarters, have gone steadily forward on to Paris. How far they will march unopposed we cannot guess.

The Bavarian troops are in excellent condition. They have been coming through Ligny at a steady pace, and their horses show no sign of exhaustion, despite the rough usage of the last few weeks. The artillery in particular are smart and soldierly. Their uniform is more becoming than that of the cavalry or the line. You must understand that the characteristic of Bavarian military costume is a helmet with a crested plume. This helmet looks extremely well with the dark uniform of the artillery. But to an English eye it sits heavily on the infantry. A regiment of riflemen, for example, with helmets such as our Life Guards wore at Waterloo, is something which must be seen to be realized. I am bound to own that the Bavarians carry off their heaviness of head-dress with a quick, active step, and with great toughness of appearance. They are not big men, being smaller decidedly than the Prussians, but they are strongly built, and seem very robust. Their brass bands are as good as could be wished, and played them up to the Prince's quarters in first-rate style, whilst as regards their equipment for a campaign, the soldiers of King Louis are capitally provided. We have seen to-day a specimen of every branch of their service—the infantry steady and solid, the artillery very well furnished, and the cavalry, though not mounted as well as the Prussians, with a soldierly air about them, which pro-

mises great things in the rough service of the outposts. These Bavarians are no contemptible allies for Prussia. Here is the Crown Prince leading an army of them to Châlons—perhaps to Paris itself. Here are their sky-blue uniforms pressing forward into the heart of France. They carry breech-loaders, but not the famous needle-gun, and they have proved what they can do in the way of fighting at Weissenburg and at Wörth. The enemies of Prussia in 1866 have become good and helpful friends to the common cause in 1870.

Where the large standard hangs out in the narrow street, and the sentries are always on guard, are the head-quarters of the Crown Prince of Prussia, the Commander-in-chief of the Third German Army. You might have seen the whole Staff of his Royal Highness before the door at about two o'clock to-day, and you would have gathered from the excitement of the officers who kept the road clear that some event of importance was expected. Bullocks were hastily driven to one side; waggons were ordered off in no measured terms; everything spoke of busy preparation for the King's arrival. A way was made through the throng of vehicles, and the movement of the Bavarian columns was checked for a while. Now there appeared an escort of cavalry at full trot. Now an open carriage behind them. That general with the flat undress cap and grey moustache, leaning back in the carriage, was the chief man of all Germany, King William of Prussia himself. He passed quickly to his son's quarters, and alighted amid the cheers of the soldiery. If Napoleon could only have captured the house, and the group on the pavement before it—if only!—but there is much virtue in the "if." Yonder tall slightly-built officer, with the rather thin face, the bright penetrating eyes, and aquiline nose, is Von Moltke, who has out-manœuvred every opponent. Near him stands another man in uniform, a civilian

rather than a soldier—if all Prussians were not rated as soldiers—Count Otto von Bismarck, the Chancellor of the North German Bund. He, too, is tall, and his firm remarkable face is too well known to need a word of comment. Every one knows, by photographs and pictures, the face of Count Bismarck. Well may the good folks of Ligny stare at these new arrivals. They are the movers of the great machine which has overthrown the French scheme of conquest and invasion.

On the 25th of August, the royal head-quarters were at Bar-le-Duc, where the King and the Crown Prince heard that MacMahon, whom they had expected to find at Châlons, had broken up his camp and burned his tents, had made at first for Rheims, and then had struck off in a northerly direction. It seemed impossible that an eminent French commander had ordered such a movement; but the German reports were clear, abundant, and trustworthy. The eye of Count Moltke at once took in all the possibilities of the situation. The Crown Prince of Saxony should meet MacMahon, and hold him in the Argonne; and by rapid marches the Third Army, under the Crown Prince of Prussia, should arrive in time to sweep round upon his right flank, and hem him in against the Belgian frontier. On the 26th, the Crown Prince of Saxony was marching for Stenay, on the Meuse, and the Crown Prince of Prussia was advancing by forced marches to Clermont en Argonne and Grand Pré.

MacMahon could only succeed on one condition—that he should outstrip the enemy by the celerity of his movements; but how unfit his army was for the most ordinary operations of war is seen in the fact that his two columns only reached Sedan and Beaumont on the 30th, having spent seven days in accomplishing the distance of fifty miles from Rheims. By that time the two German

armies had arrived in the neighbourhood, and were looking for him. On the 27th MacMahon reached Le Chene Populeux, and there, becoming aware of the danger in which the proximity of the two German armies placed him, resolved to save his army by a speedy retreat, and had actually given orders to that effect, when in the middle of the night he received positive injunctions from Paris to go forward and relieve Metz. The Emperor, who afterwards disclosed this extraordinary fact, was present with the Marshal, but "he was resolved not to oppose the decision of the Regency, and had resigned himself to submit to the consequences of the fatality which attached itself to all the resolutions of the Government." MacMahon then obeyed, and attempted to reach Montmedy by Stenay. But it was found that the Prussians were at Stenay, so he established his head-quarters at Raucourt, in order to pass the Meuse at Mouzon. On the morning of August 30th, a portion of the French army was across the river, when the right wing under De Failly was attacked at Beaumont by a Bavarian corps from the Crown Prince's army, and thrown back in great disorder on the Meuse; and on the same day another German corps struck a heavy blow at the left wing of MacMahon's army at Mouzon. The beaten corps rallied behind the Chiers at nightfall, between Remilly and Douzy, but dispirited, the troops having no confidence in their commanders, in their future, nor in themselves.

The 31st of August was spent by MacMahon as the 17th had been by Bazaine, occupying positions and preparing for a great defensive battle. His line extended from Sedan, on the Meuse, to Givonne, near the Belgian frontier. The villages of Balan and Bazeilles were in front, forming with the Chiers a line of defence not to be despised by an assailant. In front of him, on the other side of the Chiers, was the Crown Prince of Saxony and the Fourth Army, while the Crown Prince of Prussia was

on his right flank, and separated from him by the Meuse. The Germans had nearly 240,000 men. The French were about 100,000. The Special Correspondent with the Crown Prince's Army has thus described the advance of the Third Army and the position of the Germans, in a letter dated August 31st, on the eve of the battle of Sedan:—

There need be no hesitation or reserve as to speaking of to-morrow's possibilities. The plot has thickened since I last wrote, and the French must now be perfectly aware of the movement against their right flank. I necessarily write in such haste, and in the midst of such confusion, noise, dust, and trampling of feet, that it is difficult to give you a clear account of what is going on around me. On this bright August day, the last day of the month, hot, dry, and dusty, a great historical drama is hurrying to its close. How the trumpets ring out upon the evening air, as the long columns of cavalry clatter and jingle through the village streets! How ceaseless is the rumbling of waggons! Battalion after battalion of Prussian infantry has come by hot and dusty—a whole army has passed through the village during this memorable day of the forced march. To put it in more exact and technical fashion, the French advance from Rheims towards Metz and Thionville has been thwarted by a movement of the 12th and 4th Corps of the Second Army in the enemy's front, and by wonderfully rapid marching of the Crown Prince's army against the right flank of their opponents. Picture to yourself two lines of road, running nearly parallel, the one considerably to the northward of the other. From Châlons to Metz is the first line, from Rheims to Thionville is the second. It would seem that the French abandoned their camp at Châlons, and left open the road to Paris, in

order that they might take the second or nothernmost of these two routes, and proceed to the relief of Metz. We have no reason to doubt but that they seriously intended to cut their way through, and that four *corps d'armée* were assembled under the Emperor's orders. Where they seem to have been deceived was in the belief that a forward movement could be safely effected before the Crown Prince would be upon them. Never were plans better laid than those of the Prince and his chief of the Staff, General Blumenthal. Many days ago this whole manœuvre of doubling up the French line by swinging round upon it, "left shoulders forward," was arranged at the Prince's head-quarters. It was calculated that, by almost superhuman efforts in the way of marching, the 5th and 11th Prussian Corps, the Bavarians, and Würtembergers, might effect such a concentration as would baffle the French design of relieving Metz. The 6th Corps was scarcely able to get up in time by any efforts—that is, to swing round in time in its wide circle to the westward—but it would be ready to guard the left flank of the Germans, and to act as a support to the Würtembergers in case of need. Here was the trap ready laid. Here was a repetition of the shutting in of a French force northward of the main road, such as had been witnessed at Metz. But this time it was even more serious for those likely to be so shut in. The Belgian frontier was the rock ahead in case of defeat. The Belgian frontier and the frontier of neutral Luxemburg are not far off from our present position. One great defeat, one hard struggle, ending in favour of Germany, and the whole French army, baggage, artillery, military chest, may be driven into the unwilling embrace of our good allies of Belgium. I speak thus at length of the great shutting in of the French, of the wonderful forced march of the Crown Prince's army, to explain a

catastrophe of which you will have heard by telegraph. The needle-gun may do as well as the Chassepôt in a battle; but whichever weapon be the more destructive, there is no doubt that the dogged pluck of the Prussians in marching, their utter indifference to fatigue, has done more than their steady fusilade to win successes for King William.

First through rain and slush, then in milder weather, and with dust instead of mud under foot, the Third Army has swung round upon its foe. Had the French been strong enough to have a well-appointed corps of observation to the southward of Vitry—of say 80,000 men—this wheeling round of the Prussians could hardly have been risked. But the Crown Prince has disregarded the slight danger of an attack upon his rear by an ill-organized militia, and with the 6th Corps covering his left, more by necessity than choice, has closed upon MacMahon.

There was hard marching to reach the point of vantage, but when we rode out yesterday to see the advance against the French position it was lovely weather. The bayonets of the infantry glittered in the sunshine. You must fancy yourself moving from hill to hill across valleys full of armed men. You must crowd the white straight roads with rumbling trains of artillery and great masses of cavalry far to the front, where the farthest patches of woodland grow indistinct among the red and brown fields. The whole country southward of the road from Beaumont to Le Chesne is alive with German troops. The Bavarians are near Beaumont; the 4th Prussian Corps is farther to the right, and closes round upon the line of the Meuse. Immediately before us is the 5th Prussian Corps, pushing towards Stonne and Chemery. We see flashes of artillery near Beaumont. Then a heavy cannonade begins on the distant ridge behind that place—the 1st Bavarian Corps has surprised a French division in

the little town, capturing a good deal of baggage. Those "slow" Germans are to the fore again! The French reply with vigour to their assailants, and white puffs of smoke break out in all directions. There is evidently a sharp struggle to our right front about Beaumont and Mouzon, but to the left and centre the battle languishes. There is a little distant shelling, and some skirmishing in the extreme front, though the two parties are not in force near one another. Stonne is abandoned by the French, and we mount to its central position, from which everything can be seen. That battle on the right grows fiercer—crash after crash of musketry resounds from the woods near Beaumont. We can see the flashes brightly on the hills, and as night comes on we hear with thrilling effect the sharp rolling volley of the mitrailleuses. They must be fighting very hard, and the troops bivouacked upon the hills near Stonne are eager to be among the combatants. But they cannot get there to-night, and must rest upon their position, with that dull rolling and grumbling of the cannonade, to stir them round their sparkling watch-fires.

The fighting of August 30th was a preparation for the decisive closing in of August 31st. The 4th Corps took several thousand prisoners, several French cannon, and checked all advance to the south-eastward. The Bavarians also took cannon and prisoners, and the Prussians of the Third Army pushed into a good position close to the enemy's outposts. It will probably be found that yesterday's battle was an important affair—more important than one at first imagined.

The battle of Sedan was described by the same Correspondent in the following letter, dated Chemery, September 1:—

The German arms have to-day been crowned with wonder-

ful success. The greatest triumph of the war has been achieved in this battle of Sedan, and the Emperor of the French himself is among the prisoners. I have not time to tell of the clamour and rejoicings of the soldiery round about me. Before the post goes out there will not be time enough to describe the battle in its barest details. An army cut off and surrounded—an Emperor taken prisoner! These are not common results. It is so overwhelming a catastrophe for France that one can excuse the tears in the old soldier's eyes, who dashes his crutch upon the floor, and will not even smoke his pipe. It is so overwhelming a catastrophe that one cannot but sigh over the evident pleasure of the ordinary villagers at seeing a hope of peace.

How did it come about that they were caught? Thousands of my countrymen will be asking this question. The answer is plain. The French were out-manœuvred in the first rush of the war. They were beaten into a corner at Metz, blockaded in Alsace, and, generally speaking, "done for" by the splendid organization of their enemies. I have often spoken to you of the same organization—have often suggested that it must prevail. There is no need to go further back than the blocking of Bazaine at Metz to explain the capture of Napoleon at Sedan. It was felt that Bazaine must be relieved at any cost, and here is the price, paid without success. Napoleon moved from Rheims towards Metz, along the northern frontier of his Empire, in the desperate hope of fighting his way to the eastward, or of being allowed to pass without a battle. The Germans swung round their left wing with tremendous energy, brought up their centre sharply into line, and pinned the French against the Belgian frontier in the little fortress of Sedan. Never was such marching seen as that of the 5th and 11th Corps. Whilst the 4th Corps, on the left of

the Crown Prince of Saxony's army, and the Bavarians on the right of the Crown Prince of Prussia's army, were engaged in that sharp affair of August 30th, the 5th and 11th Corps, on the left of the Crown Prince of Prussia, were marching round the outside of the circle to the westward of the German forces. As we returned to head quarters after the battle of the 30th, near Beaumont and Mouzon, we found thousands of men camped, or rather bivouacked, on the hills near Stonne. They cheered the Crown Prince loudly, and were full of spirit for whatever might be wanted of them. Though they had marched some five-and-twenty miles that day, they were in excellent condition. Their bivouacs were well ordered; their camp fires were blazing bright and clear. The light of the camp fires on one hill was as significant as the flashes of rifle and mitrailleuse on the other hill, which told of where Frenchmen and Germans were fiercely contending. These camp fires to the extreme left, these crowded masses of men cheering the Prince, told of the energy with which Blumenthal was supporting the plans of Moltke, and of the determined shutting in which was destined to ruin the French.

They tramped along in light marching order; their knapsacks carried in waggons which followed at a distance. They rushed into cottages for water, or for a glass of wine, if any could be found. Tired and thirsty, the Prussian regiments thronged through Chemery on the 31st August. Tired and thirsty, they passed on to the front. As each battalion neared the Prince's quarters the drums rolled out, the men held up their heads, and went by as at a review in Berlin, but that every one seemed to have been rolled in dust-bins previously. Dusty as they were, the infantry had a fine appearance. They all seemed to understand the need of hard

marches, and to be buoyed up with the hope of complete victory.

So the net was spread, and the ends were drawn in, and the French army at Sedan was doomed to destruction. The battle of August 30th had shown that it would not be able to proceed eastward, as the Germans were everywhere so strong. It would not be able to proceed westward. Would it be able to escape even in a westerly direction? The French had got so near to Belgium that, as you might say of a ship, the least puff of wind would put them ashore. They had a chance of escaping on the morning of August 31st, by leaving their baggage and most of their artillery in Sedan, and making a running fight of it with the whole army towards Mezières and Laon. But they were too proud to run away, too slow in their movements to retreat with dignity, and were caught at a hopeless disadvantage.

The battle of Sedan was begun by the Bavarians. General von der Tann, chief of the 1st Bavarian Corps, was ready in the grey twilight to open fire, and was only prevented from leading off the attack at 4 A.M. by the thick mist in the valley of the Meuse. When we came to the hill above Donchery, at about six o'clock, there was still a mist in the valley, but it had somewhat lifted, and the dull booming of cannon told that the Bavarians were at work. You must fancy a great half circle closing in to form a complete circle of fire round the town. Place yourself at the Crown Prince of Prussia's station on the hill above Donchery, and take the corps in the order in which they stand. The 5th and 11th Prussian Corps are straining northward to close round to the left. The 6th Corps is coming round far behind, to the left rear, and will bear no part in the action, but the Würtembergers, also on the left, and in advance of the 6th Corps, will have a battle of their own with the French from Mezières.

Just before us there is Sedan, protected by its ramparts, and by an artificial inundation of the meadows beside the Meuse. To the right of the hill above Donchery, are the two Bavarian Corps, only the first of them destined to play a part on September 1st; while beyond these two corps are the forces under the Crown Prince of Saxony—the 4th Prussian, the 6th Saxon, and the corps of Prussian Guards. Thus is the circle composed which gradually closes round Sedan. King William himself takes the supreme command, because there are present two German armies—the Third Army, of the Crown Prince of Prussia, and the "Combined Army," as it is called, of the Saxon Crown Prince. The King is posted on some high ground, behind the Bavarians, to the right of the hill above Donchery. Bismarck and Von Moltke are with the King, Blumenthal is with the Prince of Prussia. With the Prince are also several other men of note, attached to his Highness's Staff. The Duke of Augustenburg and Prince Leopold of Hohenzollern are both serving on the Staff, the former in Bavarian uniform, the latter in Prussian. The Duke of Coburg Gotha is there, and so are the Princes of Weimar, of Mecklenburg, and Würtemberg. It was natural that they should be present, because they have been on the Crown Prince of Prussia's Staff throughout the war. But their presence, together with the fighting of Bavarians and Saxons side by side with Prussians on September 1st, and the fighting of the Würtembergers on the same day, towards Mezières, gives an additional stamp of German unity to the final effort. All Germany seems to be here; the Princes and the commonalty coming forth with equal zeal to repel an invasion. And here is the deadly counter-stroke by which it is being met.

The whole country as far as the frontier lies spread out like a map before us. Donchery is as clearly to be seen as

THE BATTLEFIELD BEFORE SEDAN

The elevations are given in metres

though a biscuit could be tossed down into it, and when the mist rises still farther, the course of the Meuse may be traced by stunted willows in the great bend northward which it makes hereabouts. There is no better way of realizing the features of the locality than by taking a horseshoe, producing one end straight to your left, and the other end somewhat backward to your right. On the part straight to your left is Donchery, with its line of hills across the back of the shoe. On the part prolonged to your right is Bazeilles, with a railway bridge in excellent condition. Sedan lies on the river to the right hand, where the first nail would be, and the off-side of the horseshoe bend. Cazal and Floing are farther along on the right side, and St. Meuges is about at the front of the shoe. The villages of Dasigy and Givonne lie back to the right, or behind the town, where the country is hilly and wooded. The great plain is to the left of the bend, and as the Prussian troops arrive on that side they move quickly forward across the plain to turn round the end of the horseshoe and come back down its right side. The Belgian frontier is a little way beyond the front of the shoe, so that there is ample room for the 5th and 11th Corps to act upon the line of retreat from Sedan in that direction. We can hear a constant rumbling of waggons and clattering of hoofs, as the German left is advanced, whilst there is a louder and louder roll of musketry, and booming of cannon where the Bavarians are holding the French in play to the right. At first there is a line of white smoke puffs, forming less than a semicircle to the south, south-west, and south-east of the French. The battle is hotly maintained near Bazeilles, and the French respond with energy to the attack of the Germans. It is a very sultry day. The smoke-clouds hang lower and lower over the Meuse, as the mist was hanging a few hours earlier. Bright sunshine glitters upon the cuirasses

of a Prussian regiment that trots down to the right to support the Bavarian guns, at the base of the horseshoe. A second and yet a third regiment of cavalry follow with great jingling and clatter. The scene upon the hill, near the Crown Prince's Staff, is one of active preparation. There are guns dragged lumberingly at the heels of the cavalry, and innumerable waggons follow as hard as they can go. Stragglers hurry up to join their corps, orderlies gallop away reckless of their necks, or gallop back with panting steeds up the steep road. It is thought better for the escort to dismount, and for the officers' horses to be held a little to the rear, so as not to draw the French fire upon the Staff by an unnecessary display of force. That same French fire is, however, distracted and dispersed by numerous assailants. The roar of cannon grows more intense with each minute as noontide approaches. It is clear that the army of MacMahon—we afterwards learnt that the Marshal had been wounded at an early hour, and that De Wimpffen had taken the command—is in desperate peril. Like some ship labouring in the trough of the sea, the beleagured host of France is pitifully helpless. There was a time when a squadron of light horse, or even a travelling carriage at a brisk trot, might have got away to Belgium. The northern road was open when the battle began, but the French seemed to have no idea of flight. Crushed and hampered as they are, they fight like brave men. The battle is a mere battue by one o'clock, and the circle of white smoke puffs almost shuts in the French position. This is essentially an affair of artillery, and the German guns seem to be well served, besides being powerful. But there is a constant rattle of small-arm fire in the direction of Bazeilles, where flames and black smoke tell of a conflagration. The Crown Prince of Saxony, too, is coming steadily on. It has

appeared for a moment that he was checked by the efforts of the despairing French; but the German right is growing evidently stronger, and the circle of white smoke puffs is very clearly defined to the north-eastward. Then to the left there is a sharp engagement; as the 11th Prussian Corps forces its way into Cazal and Floing, a splendid artillery fire supports the attacks of the infantry. We can see that all escape is being cut off as the Prussians get from village to village towards the slope of rising ground behind Floing, and north-westward of Sedan. If that slope be once cleared of Frenchmen, the only thing for the French to do will be to cut their way out through the Crown Prince of Saxony's army, or to retreat almost within the walls of the town. They cannot fight on their present line with Prussians in their rear.

It is a sight of terrible interest. The hill-side behind Floing has been the scene of a regular stand-up battle between lines of infantry, and there is a cannonade from another sloping ground more to the left, which smites the French with startling precision. Loud rattle the volleys of the mitrailleuses. Some four or five pieces are planted on the hill, and work hard to keep back the Prussians. But they seem to be silenced or withdrawn, and the dark masses of King William's soldiers gain several acres; all about the little cottage and the two trees at the hill-top there is a fierce encounter. Lines of infantry stand firing at one another, and it is clear that the loss is considerable, for many men fall killed and wounded. What a wild confusion it is, now that the lines have advanced and retired several times! There are scattered parties of Frenchmen rallied by their officers, and Germans brought back to the charge with hearty zeal. Both sides fight splendidly. But, on the whole, the Prussian fire seems to prevail, and the French wither before it. The shells are doing much that we

cannot appreciate at a distance. Dust flies up now and then; but it is hard to see what has been done. Yet we notice that the efforts of the French reserves to restore the battle fail before the steadiness of the Prussian attack. When one Prussian battalion hesitates, when even there is a charge in line by a body of French infantry, which requires a good deal of ground, there is always a creeping up of more and more of the dark-coated assailants. Their guns cease firing for fear of hitting them, and a gallant dash of French light cavalry is made to recover the hill-side. They ride forward, half-hidden in dust, and seem for a moment to succeed; but the artillery re-opens, the infantry pour in a deadly fire, and we see the ground strewn with men and horses. The cavalry wheel about, and go galloping back like a receding wave. That hill-side must remain in Prussian hands No, there is another rally by the French infantry. Once more they come on. The thin, blue smoke rises above the line, and they almost run in their wild attempt to push home. But the attack withers away, and nothing can be seen of the regiment which made it. There has been heavy loss it is easy to see, though the men who fall cannot now be well distinguished in the confusion.

There are other points carried by the Germans, and a closing in of the circle of white smoke round Sedan. Then a fresh attempt to break through, as though somebody of importance were to be cut out at any cost. We see numbers of Frenchmen making for the gates of the town, others wandering about as though not knowing what to do. There is a gradual cessation of the cannonade, and by about five o'clock all is quiet, save for the dropping shots from the batteries near the King's position. There is a great outburst of flame and smoke in the town, as if some stores of combustibles had taken light,

and there is a rumour that the white flag has been hoisted by the French. Then it is whispered that all these crowded troops—sixty, seventy, perhaps eighty thousand men—must surrender, for that they have no food. They surrender? Not only they, the Imperial soldiers, but the Emperor too. It is known that General Reille, an aide-de-camp of Napoleon, has come out to King William with a letter from the Emperor to his Prussian Majesty. The troops are wild with joy; they have caught him, then, and there will be an end to the war.

Two days afterwards the same Correspondent thus described the capitulation and its immediate results:—

When the firing had ceased on that terrible day before yesterday, and the great smoke cloud of the explosion in the town had slowly drifted away, there was as strange a scene of military disaster as could well be imagined. A large army was shut into the space which one division might have occupied. The fortress of Sedan had so many defenders as to make it indefensible. I have told, in a former letter, how General Reille, aide-de-camp to the Emperor, came out with a flag of truce, and was brought to King William on the hill above the Meuse. To have gone on fighting would have been madness, for the German troops held every approach to the town, and the French troops, shattered and discouraged, could not have hoped to cut their way through. They were reduced to so small a circle of outworks that, whilst they attacked one German corps, they might have been cannonaded in rear by most of the others. In a word, their condition was desperate. What a moment for the proud ruler of France! The greatest of his enemies could have wished him nothing worse; and as it became known that he himself was in the town, that this flag of truce was from

the Emperor in person, and that Napoleon III. would become a prisoner of war, men gasped for breath. Königgrätz was a great victory, but was nothing to this. There were murmurs of astonishment, almost of disbelief, as group after group of German officers, along the dusty road, learnt what had happened. It could not be doubted. The Emperor's aide-de-camp had been seen speaking with the King. And now, when it was certain that the news was true, unbounded joy filled the German host. There was a prospect of getting home again! These stern conquerors of Sedan were quiet citizens from another point of view, and thought that they had done a good share of fighting for their term of service. Germany would be safe in future, and they would have a joyful return, or, better still, first see Paris and then return home. The Crown Prince was wildly cheered as he came back to his quarters at Chemery. Every one was ordered to have lighted candles in their windows, and the soldiers made such a joyous din that there was a panic among the French inhabitants. Women screamed, and men retreated to their houses, not knowing what the hubbub might mean. My poor old landlady rushed at me for protection, and clung to my arm, saying, "Ah, monsieur, you will save me, will you not? You can speak to them. You can tell them that I have given all the bread I had. There is none left; not even a morsel for my supper!" She trembled with terror as the shouts grew louder, and was only reassured by being told that this wild hurrahing meant "Vive le Prince!" The Emperor a prisoner, the army surrendered! what did villagers know about such great matters? She hoped there would be peace; she knew that, and so did they all. It was lucky that an illumination had been ordered, for otherwise somebody must have been run over in the noisy, crowded street.

Yesterday morning, quite early, a carriage containing four French officers drove out from Sedan and came into the German lines. The carriage was accompanied by three officers on horseback, but had no other escort, and when it had got among the Germans one of its occupants put out his head, and asked them, in their own language, where was Count Bismarck? He must see him at once. The Germans said that Donchery was the most likely spot in which to find the Count, though no one knew exactly his whereabouts. Forward, then, to Donchery. The carriage dashed away, and many a curious glance was cast after it. That short drive was known to be a great historic event. Count Bismarck might live all the years that a courteous Arab would wish him, and never have such another visitor in the early morning. They met at a small house outside the town, on the left bank of the Meuse—a house where, oddly enough, the inmates, being from Luxemburg, spoke both French and German. On his first arrival the Emperor went inside. But it was thought that they could sit more comfortably in the open air—it was a delightfully fine fresh morning—so chairs were placed for them, and there they sat talking for a couple of hours. The Emperor wore the undress uniform of a general, but with one decoration on his breast, and with the usual *kepi* of the French service. Count Bismarck was in his white cuirassier uniform undress, with a flat cap and long boots. If you picture them sitting outside the small house, with the Staff officers present lying on the patch of grass not far off, and the tall poplar trees flanking the *chaussée* as far as it can be seen, you will realize this striking episode. Napoleon looked better in health than last year, but anxious and careworn. He asked to see King William, and said that he placed himself at His Majesty's disposition. As to politics, he avoided all

show of dealing in any way, whilst a prisoner, with the fate of France. He surrendered with his army, but could not yield one jot, politically, on behalf of the French people or of the Government of the Empress Regent. Count Bismarck, in his turn, placed before Napoleon the fact that this surrender of Sedan must be complete —I had well-nigh said, must be "unconditional"—but that would be going too far. It must be a complete surrender, because the French were not in a position to ask better terms. The Emperor much desired to see King William before the articles of capitulation were signed. This, however, the King had thought it better, both for himself and his illustrious prisoner, to refuse. They could not so well arrange a hard bargain as could their Ministers and Generals. In everything personal the King was resolved to treat the Emperor with consideration. But as to the question of the terms to be granted, that was another matter.

When Napoleon and Bismarck had chatted for a little while more of indifferent things, this long-to-be-remembered interview beside the Meuse was brought to an end. The Count went to prepare his own quarters in Donchery for the Emperor's reception, but it was afterwards decided that a snug château near Frenois would be more convenient, as Napoleon wished to be as little seen by people as possible. Hither, then, he was escorted by a detachment of the 1st Prussian Cuirassiers, and here he remained whilst Generals de Wimpffen and Von Moltke discussed the terms of the surrender of Sedan. There was a hard bargain to drive, but proportionate power of driving it. Not an inch of their past gains had been neglected by the Germans. Masses of infantry were posted on every line of approach to the town, guns were still pointed against the French, and a numerous body of cavalry was ready to sweep down upon

any stragglers who should perchance get through in the confusion of a sortie. The King had declared that he should re-open fire if the capitulation were not signed by noon of the 2nd inst. It was altogether a desperate case—a thorough checkmate of a fine but disheartened army. De Wimpffen was convinced of this when Von Moltke pointed out to him how carefully he had prepared his plans. Sadly and reluctantly the French General agreed to sign, as the only thing to be done. The whole army, including the Emperor, were to be considered prisoners of war. There was, indeed, a clause by which the officers were to be at liberty to return home on their written promise not to serve against Prussia or her allies during the present contest. But they were to take their men safely into Germany, and hand them over to German Commissioners. Arms and horses, artillery, and war material of all kinds, were to be given up, the town of Sedan was to be thrown open to the Germans, and the French soldiers were to be taken out to the meadows in the bend of the Meuse, between Donchery and Sedan, and there encamped until their departure for Germany could be conveniently managed. De Wimpffen spoke bitterly of his having hurried back from Africa only to find such a task as this devolve upon him. It was indeed an ill-omened journey to join a force which he found out-numbered and out-manœuvred, defeated, one might almost say, before the battle began, and to assist in an act of surrender that would be his eternal regret.

King William made a visit to the captive Emperor in the château of Frenois yesterday afternoon. Napoleon remained perfectly calm at the beginning of the visit. He received his guest of 1867, and his conqueror of to-day, with grave politeness, spoke with him for a few moments in an outer room, and then withdrew with the King into another room, where no one followed them. The Crown

Prince stepped to the door and closed it, and the French and German officers present remained some little time waiting before Napoleon and the King returned. What they had said to each other may have concerned the status of the captive Emperor. Certain it is that Napoleon was much affected by the courtesy of King William, and that he expressed to the Crown Prince in warm terms his sense of the generous manner in which he had been treated. To-day, September 3, the Emperor has started for Aix-la-Chapelle on his way to his future residence in Germany. He is to be lodged during his detention in the Palace of Wilhelms Höhe, in Cassel, a palace where once lived his uncle, King Jerome of Westphalia, and which was then called "Napoleon's Höhe." The Emperor desired to pass as little as might be through French territory, and to travel very quietly. His personal luggage, his servants, and his handsomely-appointed carriages, have been allowed to accompany him, with, I believe, a few French officers of his household, whilst General Boyen, of the Prussian army, and Prince Synar, late Prussian Secretary of Embassy in Paris, have been attached to him as aides-de-camps.

The muddy streets of Donchery, with their crowd of soldiers and teamsters, of waggons and led horses, were cleared for a few minutes this morning, between nine and half-past nine, that a train of carriages might pass at a trot and take the northern road round the great bend of the river. The people stared with idle wonder. Who could it be? Another general, perhaps. Alas! how many generals there were in the world, and how many hungry soldiers! These people would all join the Peace Society to-morrow if they gave effect to their feelings. Another general? No, 'tis he himself! they cry, as they catch sight of the Imperial liveries and of the man in that foremost carriage. 'Tis he himself! Pale and anxious-

looking, with his face firm set, but with no overwhelming depression upon it. He glances from the carriage window, and bows in return to the stranger at the corner of the street, who has raised his hat to the fallen Emperor. There are few who raise their hats; but they are horribly afraid of the German soldiers in these parts, and would think themselves as brave as the old Highlander beneath Montrose's scaffold if they took much notice of Napoleon. Then, too, I judge by their muttered remarks that the greater part of them are decidedly anti-Imperialists now, whatever they may have been before the war. The prisoners are even stronger in their language. They have been ruined by imbeciles. They have been betrayed. Their generals ought to be shot. The Emperor found his position so critical in Sedan after the armistice became known, that he was glad to come over and surrender himself, as already described. He could control the storm whilst the men were to fight and die for him, but when it came to all being prisoners together, they were somewhat dangerous in their mood. I hear that this same angry, despairing astonishment at what has happened, makes it hard work to manage the eighty thousand prisoners, or more, who have been taken, first and last, about Sedan. There was actual danger of bloodshed this morning when the prisoners began to move out of the town. Happily the officers in command showed admirable tact and firmness. The French kept their old authority by not straining the cord too tight, the Germans by not showing themselves too much on the scene. Thousands of men have been coaxed out to the camp to-day, thousands will come out to-morrow. Sedan is presenting the wildest scene of confusion which you can imagine. Narrow streets deep in mud—for we have had heavy rain to-day—the soldiers half-drunk with the stores of liquor, the houses half-burnt, and dead bodies

lying everywhere. There are thousands of wounded men to be cared for. Marshal MacMahon was severely injured in the beginning of the battle, though his life is in no danger, and the loss among the French in superior officers has been something dreadful.

You ask, what is to be our next move? I answer, "To Paris." So say the men, so says the whole voice of public rumour and public opinion in the German armies. To Paris, unless the French will yield up Strasburg and Metz, and pay the war expenses. Count Bismarck would be content with less, but the German people insist on hard terms, and the German people must be obeyed. To Paris, then, is the cry, and with their accustomed energy the muddy, travel-stained legions of King William are off and away on the road to the French capital. You ask what the numbers of the contending armies were in this crowning victory of September 1st. There seems to have been a rather larger French force, and a rather smaller German force, than the officers with whom I spoke had led me to suppose, on the battle-field of Sedan. Let us take the German strength at 175,000, and the French strength at 90,000 men, in the great fight of the day before yesterday. Each side had more men in existence, but not ready to hand. The French had another division at Mezières, which came up and skirmished with the Würtembergers, but could effect nothing to relieve the Emperor. The Germans had the tenth division (of the 5th Corps) which never fired a shot or lost a man on September 1st, and they had the 4th Corps, which only came into line at the end of the fight: thus it would seem that about ninety thousand Frenchmen, somewhat discouraged and somewhat disorganized, were caught in a corner by one hundred and seventy thousand Germans; that the French fought well, but not hopefully; and that the Germans pressed

on with stern indifference to their heavy loss, until they had utterly crippled and hampered their opponents. The German fire centred upon Sedan, and the French fire was distributed in all directions, so there was no parity of loss in killed and wounded. So terrible was the German artillery fire; so completely were whole French divisions taken in flank, in rear, and all round the compass, as their enemies closed upon them, that it is pretty safe to fix the French loss at about twice that of the Germans, or even two and a half times. The mitrailleuses were of no great service; the Chassepôt was, and is, a splendid arm. If the well-organized, well-handled Germans had had the Chassepôt, and the French had used the needle-gun, there would have been an even greater catastrophe. Then as to the troops engaged. The French had a few Zouaves and a good many Turcos, with cavalry, both light and heavy, and a mass of infantry of the line. The Germans had a great many Bavarians—the 1st Bavarian Corps hotly engaged, and the 2nd partly engaged, in the action—a great many Prussians, and among them the Prussian Guard Corps, the finest troops in the country. The Prussian Guards bore a tremendous attack from the French on the extreme right, and one regiment alone, that of the Queen of Prussia, or the 4th Grenadier Regiment, lost five hundred men in a battalion a thousand strong—just half the battalion. The French Imperial Guard bore no part in the battle of Sedan, though by an accident of campaigning the French Emperor was taken prisoner. I have seen the greater part of the field of battle—a terrible sight—of which, as far as it assists in understanding what occurred, I will tell you in my next letter.

The Emperor Napoleon has recently given the world the exact form of the communications which passed between him and the King of Prussia, on the evening of September 1st:—

"Sire my brother,—Not having been able to die in the midst of my troops, it only remains for me to place my sword in the hands of your Majesty. — I am your Majesty's good brother, NAPOLEON."

The King replied as follows :—

"Sire my brother, — Regretting the circumstances under which we meet, I accept the sword of your Majesty, and I invite you to designate one of your officers provided with full powers to treat for the capitulation of the army, which has so bravely fought under your command. On my side, I have named General Moltke for this purpose. —I am your Majesty's good brother, WILHELM.

"*Before Sedan, Sept.* 1, 1870."

On the 3rd the Special Correspondent wrote :—

The evacuation of the town has gone on in earnest to-day. Already there is a great camp on the peninsula within the bend of the Meuse. The prisoners taken in the battle have gone away in strong detachments, guarded by German troops, and those who were upon the rainy, muddy road to the rear last night, as was the present writer, saw columns of Frenchmen tramping briskly along, with the German escort marching by their side in the worst of humours at being so employed, and with blankets muffled over the men's heads to keep off the rain. Well might the villagers stare at so novel a sight—their own countrymen blocking the way, but blocking it as prisoners—their own uniform dragged to prison, as if if it were a capital crime to be a Frenchman. The poor folks seemed chiefly anxious to avoid further loss, and chiefly suspicious of soldiers of any kind. But it was clear that amid all their terror and all their fear of downright starvation, they had a warm corner in their hearts for the lads of their own language and nation. I have

seen many women to-day cooking for the prisoners and trying to push through the crowd to bring them small dainties. In the church at Donchery there were hundreds of French soldiers collected this morning. Cavalry and infantry, Zouaves and Cuirassiers, huddled together in marvellous fashion. The smart, dashing men whom we have seen when we travelled through France were reduced to a condition of semi-shabbiness and blank despondency which was something new to see. They were wont to be the gayest fellows in the world, and here were rolled up, tumbled over, and generally "done for," by men whom they had been rash enough to despise.

I rode over the greater part of the battle-field yesterday morning—the morning after the fight. It was a shocking thing to see so many dead men and wounded men, and dead and wounded horses, crowded together in some places. It was a sight to cause reflections, as the old Frenchman said who lived in the village where the fighting had been hottest. "*Ah! mon Dieu, Monsieur, c'est là la guerre.*" He took a sombre view of *la guerre*, for the scene was horrible. With two friends who were anxious to study the positions of the armies contending on September 1st, I went round through Donchery and past the great bend of the Meuse, came towards the French lines as the 11th Prussian Corps had come, and pushing southward between the outposts of the hostile armies, traversed the railway bridge at Bazeilles, to return to head-quarters. The first sign of active and immediate war was the block of prisoners at Donchery. There they were, of all arms of the service, the dark-faced Turco and the young boyish conscript, collected in a mass, ready to be marched away. The plain beyond Donchery was covered with slightly-wounded men wandering to the rear. French and German, friend and foe, it mattered not; they went amicably along, the

common suffering making them friends. No one seemed to dream of further violence and further fighting. The battle was over, and they were glad to creep together to the rear, with little civilities exchanged in the way of pipe-lights and sips of brandy, and with no more hostile feeling than two patients already in an hospital. We passed hundreds of them as we went round the bend of the stream and came upon the first signs of the conflict of the day before. There was a dead horse, a cuirass, a heap of broken weapons. In this cottage were several wounded Frenchmen, taking some soup with a wounded Prussian, who seemed almost too much hurt to eat. Behind the garden wall was a dead cuirassier, his hands clutching the grass in the agony of death, his face stern and determined. No one noticed him any more than if he were a dead horse. In quiet England whole districts will turn out to see a murdered family, and here on a battle-field the same murdered family would be trampled into the mud without being noticed. This meadow on the hill-side is full of mangled horses and dead cuirassiers. It was here that they made a frantic attempt to break through, and were mowed down by the Prussian fusilade. You must have been on several battle-fields to understand the signs of what has taken place by the look of the spot next morning. This group of dead horses, with a helmet or two and a dozen cuirasses, with a broken trumpet and three dead cuirassiers, means serious work. The dark stains on the ground are where the wounded have lain and been removed. The little heap of swords under that hedge is where some dismounted troopers were forced to surrender. Then we come to Prussian helmets crushed and trampled. Some are marked by shell or bullet, and have blood upon them. They tell of loss to the regiment to which they belonged. Others have no particular

trace of violence, and may either be signs of wounded men, or of men who have simply thrown their helmets away in the heat of action, and put on their forage caps to march more lightly. These dark stains, surrounded by knapsack and rifle, by greatcoat and cooking tin, are where men have lain who have been badly wounded, or even killed, but whose friends have made them as comfortable as could be under the difficulties of the time. One has a little shelter of twigs and branches put to keep off the sun; another has had a blanket propped on two rifles, and his knapsack for a pillow. But he has died in the night, and is left with his cloak over his face until the burying party shall come round. See yonder drums and knapsacks, stains of blood, and dead men lying on their faces. It is where a blow has been struck at some infantry regiment. The men have fallen under a musketry fire, and the line of dead shows where the ground was held. Come a few steps farther to the rear. You perceive a few more dead men, shot whilst in flight, and a number of bright, well-cleaned rifles scattered on the turf. This is where the regiment broke and fled, where some perished with their backs to the foe and others threw down their arms. We might gather the minutest details of the loss on either side if only human strength and energy sufficed to traverse this immense tract in a single morning. When another day has passed. and the dead are buried and the arms collected, it is difficult to judge of the fight by seeing the ground; whilst on the third or fourth day, the dead horses become so much decayed that, until they are removed, it is well-nigh impossible to move about where they have fallen. All honour to the helpers of the wounded—to the regular and volunteer hospital assistants. Their red-cross badge must be a joy to many a sufferer; and though some who wear the badge seem

disposed to "loaf" about rather than to be helpful and active, yet the greater part do their duty well. The better sort of volunteers in the work—the Sisters of Charity and surgeons who have donned the badge—are full of zeal. Some of the best families of Germany are represented among these helpers of the wounded; there are several foreigners, too, engaged in the common cause of humanity. Thanks to all that is done, the wounded are so soon removed to villages or placed under some sort of shelter, that even next morning there are but a few of them to be seen on the ground. They are being brought to the nearest ambulance waggon on stretchers, with many cries and groans, Heaven help them! or are lodged in a cottage near the field, or are carefully bandaged up and laid on straw, and sent jolting painfully away in country carts to a more remote hospital.

We found the hill-side north-west of Sedan covered with dead men and horses. The village in the hollow between the hostile lines was not much knocked about, and there were few shell-marks on the road leading up to the summit. But once arrived at the point where the Prussian fire had begun to tell, we found traces of its terrible effect. Here lay a dead horse in the middle of the road, with saddle and bridle, just as it had fallen. Here was a Frenchman shot through the head, behind a small clump of earth, where he had taken shelter in skirmishing. Then there were several more horses and men lying upon the road; and at length a slight breastwork to either side, carried along the ridge of the hill, and full of French soldiers who had died in its defence. The ground began to be ploughed up with the shell-fire from the opposite rising ground, where the Prussian artillery so long remained. Near the two trees and the cottage prominent on the summit, were traces of the sharp fighting which I had observed the previous day.

A mitrailleuse battery, of four pieces, was surrounded with dead bodies; horses and men were lying on all sides —I cannot quite say in heaps, but very thickly scattered. At one place there were horses as thick as they could lie. But this was a little farther down the slope to the southward, where I had seen that gallant cavalry charge. The Chasseurs-à-cheval and the Chasseurs d'Afrique had dashed along the hill-side, half-hidden in the dust which they raised, and had been destroyed by a steady fusilade. Here lay the famous light horsemen, with their bright uniforms dabbled in blood, and their fiery little steeds crushed and mangled by Prussian shells. Most of the men and horses now on the ground were dead, but some few wounded men yet lingered in agony, with white rings tied to sticks that were planted beside them as a means of calling the surgeon's attention when he should have time to revisit them. The badly wounded horses, more fortunate for once in being brutes, had been killed to put them out of pain, and only a stray horse slightly wounded stood dismally here and there, wondering, perhaps, what it could all mean. Behind the scene of the light cavalry charge is a ravine that separates this shoulder of the rising ground from that immediately above Sedan. In the ravine there had been great slaughter at the end of the fight, when the French were crowded together from different points. Up behind the woods on the farthest summit of the rising ground was all the *débris* of a rout. It had been clear, even from a distance, that the beaten army struggled hard. Yet, nevertheless, they had been beaten, and here were arms thrown down, waggons abandoned, caps and coats, swords and rifles of every branch of the service, lying scattered on the ground. Some considerable body of troops, cut off from Sedan by the advance of the Prussians, had tried to break through to the town, and had been dispersed or captured. The whole of the north-

ward and north-eastward slopes—of what we may call from this side the country—at the back of the town, showed traces of this crowding together and of the heavy cross-fire of German artillery, which had begun so soon as the circle of the attack became narrowed to a sufficient degree. Nearly 100,000 men, as now appears, were hampered and shut in by less than 200,000 of their enemies. No amount of devotion could extricate the French army when once it had become the centre of a converging fire. The ghastly wounds inflicted on most of the French dead, whom I saw upon the hill, showed that they had fallen under an artillery fire, and the ground was in many places so ploughed up that a blanket could scarcely have been laid on it without covering some spot where a shell had exploded. The thick woods at the back of the town were full of wreck and rubbish—abandoned waggons, with the dead horses at the side, to show why they had been so left; stores of biscuit, harness, and soldiers' knapsacks were still very plentiful as one approached the village of Bazeilles, southward of Sedan, where the Bavarians had fought. The village was on fire, and the streets presented shocking sights to scare away the inhabitants again for a couple of days more, should they now return. The half-burnt bodies of Frenchmen and Bavarians were being brought out from among ruins, and laid by the roadside. Men yet living, but terribly wounded and scorched, were moved on litters to beyond the stifling smoke of the conflagration. There was reason to fear that many poor lads had been literally roasted when the fire came upon them, and their wounds forbade all hope of escape. This village was, perhaps, the gloomiest part of all the acres of pain and death spread around Sedan. The interior of the town itself is said to be very much injured, but that I have not yet had time to visit.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE capitulation of an army of eighty thousand men at Sedan—an event unparalleled in military annals, and almost incredible—could only be regarded by all serious and intelligent Frenchmen as a grand national disaster. Nevertheless, at Paris, for the moment, all regret was forgotten in the consolatory thought that now at length the Empire—the mysterious source of every kind of misfortune—must inevitably disappear. A stormy meeting in the Chamber, and a little stammering on the part of the Ministers, and then the Empire vanished. Count Palikao informed the Empress on the 4th of September that he could not answer for her tranquillity much longer, and Her Majesty quietly withdrew from France. When, on the same day, a number of representatives of Paris declared themselves a National Government, and severally repaired to take possession of the public offices, they found the places vacant, and occupied them without resistance. The reception of the news of Sedan was thus described by a "Parisian Resident" (later "A Besieged Resident"), writing on Sunday, September 4th:

The news of the Emperor's capture reached the foreign embassies here at ten yesterday morning. At about eight o'clock it began to be rumoured that the Emperor and MacMahon's army had surrendered. I saw a crowd of about 2,000 men going down the Boulevard, and shouting "La déchéance." I took the arm of a patriot, and we all went

together to the Louvre to interview General Trochu. He came out after we had shouted for him about half an hour, and a deputation had gone in to him. There was a dead silence as soon as he appeared, so what he said could be distinctly heard. He told us that the news of the capture of the Emperor was true, and that as for arms, he could not give more than he had, and he regretted to say that the millions on paper were not forthcoming. Linked to the arm of my patriot, I then went with the crowd to look up the deputies of the Left, but none of them were at home. The patriot said that he had heard that there was to be a night sitting of the Corps Législatif, so, after refreshing at a café, he and I, with two other gentlemen in blouses, went off to the Place de la Concorde. We crossed the bridge and joined a crowd standing before the Palais du Corps Législatif. A few minutes after we were there, however, we were forced back across the river by a squadron of Gardes de Paris. In the crowd I lost two of my friends, and found myself alone with one of the blouses. He told me that he was a Republican, and that he meant to fight the next day against the Empire, and then against the Prussians. We sat talking on the parapet of the quay until about 1.30, when the Gardes de Paris fell back, and I not only got across the river, but into a gallery of the Chamber. There were hardly any deputies present, but gradually they came in and took their seats. M. Schneider, the President, appeared, and explained that at the request of several deputies he had called them together; and then General Palikao ascended the tribune, and in the midst of a solemn silence made the statement which you, by the time you receive this, will know. Jules Favre followed him to the tribune, and proposed to declare the *déchéance*. Again silence. At last General Palikao, and after him the President, suggested that it would be well to adjourn until the next morning, and the deputies slowly

left. Anything at once so quiet and so lugubrious I never witnessed. When Blouse and I went out the crowd outside had entirely disappeared, and so, shaking hands, we parted, and I went through the silent streets home.

This morning when Paris awoke it found the walls placarded with the address of the Ministers. At eleven o'clock I went to the Place de la Concorde. It was full of people, and from all the streets leading to it armed bands of National Guards were marching. A double line of mounted Gardes de Paris was drawn up before the bridge. Behind them I got. The first band of National Guards which tried to pass the bridge were forbidden to do so by the officer commanding the Gardes de Paris. He ordered his soldiers to draw their swords, and the National Guards on their side shouted, "En avant." I began to feel somewhat uncomfortable; but, after a short parley, the soldiers sheathed their swords, and the National Guards passed over the bridge, shouting, "Vive la République." This band was followed by many others, until I suppose about 20,000 National Guards had passed the bridge and stood round the Assembly, the flag of which was now flying to show that the *séance* had commenced. By this time there must have been 100,000 men and women in the Place de la Concorde. This crowd was composed of working men, loungers, women, children, and soldiers. Every now and then there was a panic and a rush, but as every one seemed to be of one mind, there was no danger of blood being shed. The following expression I heard about a hundred times, and it sums up the feeling of the Parisians—"An Emperor dies, but does not surrender." On all sides I heard abuse lavished on the Emperor. Every now and then some wiry working man got upon the shoulder of a friend, and shouted "Vive la République!" "À bas l'Empereur!" when the cry was repeated

all round him. Round the gate of the gardens of the Tuileries, which were closed, there was a large crowd. At one time I thought they were going to force open the gate, and attack the few soldiers who were on guard within. Indeed, the garden was only saved by a Zouave inside, who knew his countrymen, dancing the *cancan*. After remaining about two hours on the Place de la Concorde, I went to the Boulevards; they were occupied by a pacific crowd waiting for news. Suddenly a cry was raised, "La République est declarée." A regiment, the only one which I had seen that day, was marching down. At that moment it was met by a detachment of the National Guard coming from the Chamber. Guard, regiment, and people immediately fraternized; the soldiers all reversed their arms. The "Marseillaise" was sung, and the soldiers disappeared into the neighbouring cafés, where they were treated to drink. From the aspect of Paris, one would suppose that news of a great victory had been received. Such perfect unanimity I never witnessed. As it is Sunday, the people are walking about with their wives and children in holiday dress. The Gardes Nationale are marching home along the Boulevards as though they had come from a review. The windows and the pavements are lined with people cheering them. It is felt by all that the surrender of the Chief of the State must be repudiated by the nation; that it has been repudiated; and that the dishonour falls consequently on the man, and not on France.

The Paris Correspondent, writing also on the 4th of September, thus described the events of that memorable day:—

I have witnessed a peaceful revolution in Paris, with results as great as the bloodiest ever known in this city of revolutions. I am about to describe in few words for this post strictly what I saw, and I had the luck to see a

great deal. Knowing that the Corps Législatif was to hold an extraordinary sitting at one o'clock, I got into a carriage at two, and told the driver to go to the Champs Elysées, hang about the Place de la Concorde, and get over one of the bridges to the Faubourg St. Germain. He objected that there were great crowds in the route I had marked out for him, and doubted whether he could get along. "Try," said I, and so he did, and we succeeded. On the Place de la Concorde there were many groups of people and several companies of National Guards, but still carriages could circulate. I observed that the National Guards carried laurels on their bayonets, and that numbers of citizens had sprigs of green (meant to represent laurels) in their hats. The laurels could not mean victory over the foreign enemy; but they were worn as emblems of victory over the internal enemy—the Emperor. My attention was attracted to one of the colossal allegorical statues at the north-east corner of the Place, representing the City of Strasburg. This statue was decked out with flowers, and an enormous placard was hung round the neck bearing the words "Honour and glory to General Uhrich." A succession of democratic orators mounted the parapet at the foot of the statue and harangued a vast crowd with great success. I could not get near enough to hear their eloquence, but it was about the Republic, and the certain victory which the Republic could bring. I then turned my carriage and went towards the Place de la Concorde. The approaches were occupied by troops, and it was impossible to cross. I observed the steps of the Corps Législatif on the other side of the river covered with people, and saw that the quays, right and left, were closely studded with infantry, cavalry, National Guards, and people, all mixed up together. At this moment the weather was beautiful—it was one of the most glorious

early September days ever seen. I drove slowly along the quay parallel with the orangerie of the Tuileries towards the palace. The Tuileries gardens were full of people. I learned that in the morning orders had been given to close the gates, but that half an hour before I passed the people had forced them open, and that neither the troops nor the police made any resistance. My coachman, who, I dare say, was an Imperialist yesterday, but was a very strong Republican to-day, pointed out to me several groups of people bearing red flags. I told him that the tricolour betokening the presence of the Empress still floated from the central tower of the Tuileries. While I was speaking, and exactly at twenty minutes past three, I saw that flag taken down. That is an event in a man's life not to be forgotten. Crossing over the Pont de Solferino to the Quai d'Orsay, I witnessed an extraordinary sight indeed. From the windows of those great barracks, formerly peopled with troops every man of whom was supposed to be ready to die for his Emperor, I saw soldiers smiling, waving handkerchiefs, and responding to the cries of "Vive la République," raised by gendarmes, cavalry, soldiers of the line, National Guards, and people below. Well-dressed ladies in open carriages shook hands with private soldiers and men in blouses, all crying "Vive la République." Nay, strangers fell on each other's necks and kissed each other with "effusion." In the neighbourhood of the Pont Neuf I saw people on the tops of ladders busily pulling down the Emperor's bust, which the late loyalty of the people induced them to stick about in all possible and impossible places. I saw the busts carried in mock procession to the parapet of the Pont Neuf and thrown into the Seine; clapping of hands and hearty laughter greeting the splash which the graven image of the mighty monarch made in the water. I went as far as the Hotel de Ville, and

found it in possession of His Majesty the Sovereign People. Blouses were in every one of M. Haussmann's balconies. How they got there I do not know. I presume that M. Chevreau did not invite them. But they got in somehow without violence. The great square in front of the Hotel de Ville was full of the National Guards, most of them without uniform. They carried the butts of their muskets in the air, in token that they were fraternizing with the people. The most perfect good humour prevailed. Portraits of the Emperor and Empress, which many of your readers must have seen in the Hotel de Ville ball-rooms, were thrown out of the window, and the people trod and danced upon the canvas. On leaving the Hotel de Ville, I saw in the Avenue Victoria M. Henri Rochefort let out of prison, as a logical consequence of events, but half an hour before. He was on a triumphal car, and wore a scarlet scarf. He was escorted by an immense mob, crying "Vive Rochefort." He looked in far better health than I expected to see him after his long imprisonment, and his countenance beamed with delight. He has seen his desire on his enemy.

This bloodless revolution seems to have been thoroughly effected so far as Paris can do it, but I am not yet able to say precisely how effectually it has been done. The Senate, which, if the Republic proclaimed to-day holds its own, will be to-morrow but a set of elderly gentlemen lamenting over the loss of their positions, made a show of fighting this afternoon, and took their stand as "illustrations of the Empire and guardians of the Constitution." A M. de Chabriat, as soon as M. Rouher took the chair, said that some deputies, forgetting their oath, had moved the deposition of the Emperor. They had no right to do this. He was vanquished and a prisoner, and he, the speaker, would pay a last homage to him, and cry "Vive

l'Empereur!" Several senators (there were not many of them present) cried "Vive l'Empereur!" M. Rouher said very gallantly that any such vote as that which their colleagues had mentioned as likely to be sent up to them from the other House, would be firmly repudiated. He proposed an adjournment for two hours. At two o'clock the Senate met again, and then M. Rouher alluded to a proposal for the Emperor's abdication, moved by M. Jules Favre; but said, that inasmuch as the populace had broken into the Chamber, the vote amounted to nothing. A valiant senator exclaimed, "We are here by virtue of the Plébiscite, and we protest against force and violence." The Senate then agreed to adjourn, and I dare say it will never meet again. *Requiescat!* I said a great deal more harm of it when it was created in 1852 than I care to say now. In the Corps Législatif to-day, Count Palikao himself proposed the election of a sort of Provisional Government, but he himself was to have been at the head of it, and M. Thiers was to have been a member. Subsequently the Left, supported by the National Guard and the populace, who made a bloodless charge upon the line, and got into the Chamber, became so strong that all the Ministry, followed by most of the members of the Right, left the House, and the Opposition had it all its own way. At four o'clock the Republic was proclaimed at the Hotel de Ville, with the following Provisional Government:—MM. Gambetta, Jules Favre, Pelletan, Rochefort, Jules Ferry, Jules Simon, Ernest Picard; Keratry, Prefect of Police; Arago, Mayor of Paris.

I cannot tell whether to-morrow this Government will be disputed by anybody; all I can say is, that to-night nobody disputes the Republic. The sergents de ville who yesterday fired a volley upon the procession which cried *déchéance*, now keep themselves out of sight. The

fraternization between the military and the people in the name of the Republic is so palpable and universal, that I do not think Count de Palikao could achieve a massacre if he cared to order one.

An old Republican journalist, whose patriotism is undoubted, said to me to-day, while sobbing with sorrow at the French reverses, "This proves that Pretorian soldiers are no match for free men." My friend is perhaps right so far, and there is much comfort in the thought. But I could not without hurting his feelings say to him what I now say to your readers, that in my opinion the change in the form of government from an Empire to a Republic will not enable the French nation after having lost the flower of its army, to resist the disciplined and hitherto victorious invaders. This, however, is not the French opinion, and it would not be safe to express it in any French society whatever. I am afraid that rivers of blood must yet flow before the impulsive French people become alive to this truth It does not matter that many of the comparatively disciplined troops of MacMahon fled like sheep when the balls began to whistle about their ears. They have an intense belief in "France rising in its might," and fancy that the thousands of civilians now walking about the streets with guns in their hands, will do better than the trained soldiers who have been beaten under the best Generals that France could produce. And yet when these men, whose trade is war, and who from training and *esprit de corps* will run risks of life which are to civilians incomprehensible, yield to stern necessity and surrender rather than die, the deluded citizens of Paris imagine that men having no military qualities or habits at all will die to the last man on the Paris fortifications rather than allow the serried legions of the Red Prince to parade the streets of Paris. A caricature of Gill in the "Eclipse" precisely represents the feeling of Paris at this

moment. Paris, standing on her fortifications, is depicted by a female figure called Judith. Outside is the King of Prussia in the guise of Holofernes. Judith beckons to Holofernes, and says "Come here!" and the obvious moral is that if he listens to the voice of the charmer it will be all up with him. At eleven this evening Henri Rochefort passed in triumph all along the Boulevards. Soldiers of all arms marched behind him carrying lanterns. Who could have imagined such a scene when the first number of his *Lanterne* came out?

Before the new Ministers were settled in their places, they learned that the German armies which had fought at Sedan were already on their way to Paris, and it became necessary to provide at once for the defence of the capital. No more was heard of saving France by *pompiers:* the people themselves were immediately armed as far as the resources of the Minister of War would permit, and the completion of the fortifications was seriously taken in hand. It was too soon to think of creating a new field army. Metz, it was believed, might yet be saved by the valour and prudence of Bazaine. The city of Strasburg received honours in decrees, and in demonstrations before its allegorical statue in Paris, and Toul was declared to have deserved well of the country. But a Government whose members had formerly been elected deputies by Paris held that its first duty was to the capital. It, however, at once gave freedom and an impulse to the military spirit of all France, such as the fallen Government had been afraid to venture on. The consequence was, that in scores of departments scenes might be encountered such as this, described by the Paris Correspondent on a journey through Western France:—

I arrived very late at the pretty little old Norman town of Alençon, and slept there. At seven in the morning I witnessed a scene, the counterpart of which was, I believe,

going on in almost every town in France. The public promenade, a pretty triangular green bordered with chestnut trees, was covered as thickly as the great square in Chatham barracks at the same hour, with squads of recruits, going through various stages of primary drill. These were fair specimens of the levy *en masse* now going on throughout France, and which sanguine Frenchmen, especially Parisians, hope will destroy the Prussian invader without fail, even if the extinction of the regular army should be completed. The squads which I saw consisted of men of all ages and all ranks. The majority, of course, belonged to the humbler classes, but side by side with the blue blouse were many portly citizens clad in broadcloth. Some of them, at the ripe age of sixty, were learning the goose step for the first time. They had none of them either arms or uniform, and I doubt whether there are any arms in the town. But they very conscientiously went through the duty required of them by the drill sergeants of squaring their toes, keeping their heels together, doing right and left face, with as much unanimity as the stiff joints of some of the oldest among them permitted, and putting the left foot first on the word given, "The line will advance—mar-r-ch." The drill sergeants were all simple fellows, whose knowledge was derived from former service in the army. They wore their every-day working costume. One of them, a cook at an inn, drilled his squad in his white paper cap and cotton apron. A more characteristic type of a citizen soldier could not be seen. If this civic force of Alençon should persevere in the efforts which I saw for a month, they will certainly by that time be able to form four deep, wheel into line, and even form square very creditably. But if in the meantime, or even for a good while afterwards, four Prussian Uhlans should take a fancy to gallop into Alençon, as the inhabitants now grievously fear they

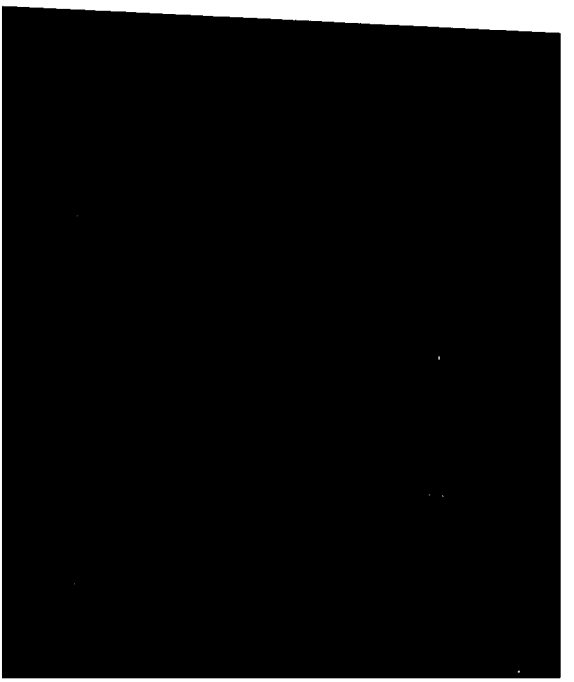
will, I am afraid all the drilling will turn out of small avail for the defence of the town. It would be more to the purpose if, instead of all this scientific corporal's drill, the volunteers were to be at once put to ball-practice. A good weapon, a good aim, and a good heart might do a great deal at a push, even if keeping step and marching shoulder to shoulder were left to the spur of the moment.

[redacted]

ERRATUM.

Page 169, line 14, *for* 12th of August, *read* 12th of September.

[redacted]



CHAPTER IX.

THE Third and Fourth German Armies had now their way open to Paris, for after the Army of the North, as that of MacMahon was called, had failed even more disastrously than the Army of the Rhine, France had no other to place in the field. But the distance to be traversed was great, and although the Germans took up their position before Paris fifteen days after their first corps had set out from Sedan, a fortnight seemed a long time to pass without some signal occurrence. The Crown Prince of Saxony moved along the valley of the Marne by Château Thierry and Meaux to Lagny, while the Crown Prince of Prussia advanced by Montmirail, Coulommiers, Charmes, and Brie Comte Robert. The Correspondent with the Crown Prince of Prussia's army wrote from Montmirail, on the 12th of August:—

Montmirail is a small place when compared with the fine city of Rheims, through which I have passed on my way hither. In Rheims, with its glorious cathedral and its memories of Royal coronations, there is gloom and restraint The enemy have taken possession of the city. King William himself is there The King's head quarters are established in the episcopal palace beside the cathedral, and the head quarters of the Würtemberg Corps, which garrisons the city, are established in the hotel before the cathedral door. Officers come and go, horses clatter over the stones, and orderlies trot in and out with incessant bustle. But though there is plenty of life in

one sense, yet Rheims is gloomy and restrained. The people do not like it, and they cannot prevent it. Here are enemies far milder than the invaders of 1814. I saw dozens of young women passing across the public square on their way to the cathedral, and they had no violence to fear. I saw shops open, which were receiving money payments for the puchases of the soldiery. But it is hard to be ordered about by strangers and enemies when we have been led to think ourselves beyond all attack. The mayor has to advise his townsfolk earnestly to abstain from violence, and the Prussian authorities make such requisitions as they think necessary for the good of their service. These requisitions are made on the city, it is fair to add, and the private citizen has only to provide food for the soldiers actually quartered upon him. He need not let himself be bullied by any chance soldier even out of a morsel of bread. King William has resolved that no irregular exactions shall cause the people greater suffering than the war must, perforce, inflict. It is difficult to prevent small irregularities and petty plundering, but these things press more harshly on country villages than on a city like Rheims, where His Majesty himself is quartered.

Whilst the rain poured in torrents on the gusty September days which followed the great victory, there was ceaseless trampling of mud and splashing up of muddy water in the town and on the battle-field of Sedan. Thousands came and went along the road to the Belgian frontier, until this same road, so quiet at ordinary times, was made the busiest of international thoroughfares. Thousands marched away towards Germany with heavy steps and grave downcast faces. These were the French prisoners. Who could say what foolish dreams of easy victory and of *promenades militaires* had floated through their heads a month before? They had misunderstood the

case, they had been ill commanded and signally overthrown. But it was impossible not to pity the poor fellows as they went by in long mud-splashed columns, their gay uniforms utterly faded, their small relics of equipment carried with anxious care. Here was one with a saddle-cloth held over his shoulders to keep off the rain, and an empty cooking tin clutched in his other hand. Then came, perhaps, a couple whose great-coats were to the fore, but who had nothing else. Then a man fairly drenched in his uniform coat, yet with the rare luxury of a knapsack, and with the suspicion of a pair of boots therein. So they went by in never-ending columns. Batches of men in great distress from damp and hunger. Other batches seemingly more fortunate, better clothed, or, for some reason, better provided. The cavalry without their horses, the infantry without their heavy load of sack and coat, and tent, which is almost part of themselves.

There was dismal work to be done amid all the rain and mud of the days which followed the great victory. The dead were to be buried and the wounded were to be removed for fear of sickness. As late as the fourth day there were dozens of dead Frenchmen on the road between Sedan and Givonne, and it was not until the sixth day after the battle that the dead horses were seriously dealt with. So many men still living, but suffering great agony, claimed the care of all who could lend a helping hand, that to leave the dead unburied for awhile was as nothing in comparison. In the villages, on the battle-field itself, there was scarcely a foot of shelter to be found unoccupied. Every house had a garrison of wounded men, and the doctors were busy with their drugs and their instruments working hard to relieve the sufferers. The red cross of the hospital assistants was to be seen in all directions. If there was

a mass of sufferers to be helped and tended, there was also a wide spread organization to bring them help. Wounded men were in the villages and in the town. They were taken over the Belgian frontier, to be conveyed away by rail to France or Germany. They were spread farther and farther, by slow degrees, from the spot where they had fallen, in order that there might be better means of caring for them and less chance of infection. It often seemed that the common suffering and mutual helplessness had made the enemies of a few hours before quite forget their hostile attitude. I remember noticing on the morning after the battle that Frenchmen and Germans limped along together in forlorn groups of twenty or a dozen, without the least sign of enmity, in fact with tolerable politeness one to another. These lightly-wounded men found their way to the rear at their own pace, often stopping to rest. You might have seen at times a soldier of either side chatting in broken fashion, by signs and stray words, to some soldiers, also wounded, of the other side. Or it would happen that the courtesies of a resting place beside the road, of a sheltered corner, or grassy bank, were done with a simple nod and grunt of welcome by the first comers to the sometime enemy, who limped up with an imploring look. Between the unwounded prisoners and their guard it could not but be that roughness and jealousy should appear. The prisoners were sullen of mood, the guard put over them were disposed to try whether loud speaking would not make German clearly comprehended. But the wounded, conquerors and conquered, got on together excellently well. They had a fellow-feeling which made them almost friends.

All through the fertile province of Champagne, down the straight *chaussées*, with their lines of poplar trees, and among the pleasant villages on the vine-covered slopes, the Prussians have advanced towards Paris.

There was a great bend to the northward when the Crown Prince swung round upon MacMahon and pinned him in against the Belgian frontier at Sedan. There was a momentary pause after the success of September—a pause merely to rest the exhausted troops, and then a second movement as decided and almost as rapid as that of the shutting in of MacMahon. The German forces returned to the main road to their promised goal. They came slanting back to the line of the Marne, and occupied village after village, town after town, with astonishing quickness. The French had no time to prepare a systematic defence. Before the National Guard could even be armed, far less exercised, those fluttering pennants of black and white which told of the Prussian Lancers, or those spiked helmets of the Prussian Dragoons, were seen approaching. Everything had to be abandoned. The armed force, such as it was, dispersed or retreated, and the people submitted themselves to the inevitable in the way of war contributions. It has been such a flood of invasion as has been seldom seen in the history of the world. There has been the energy of some Teutonic inroad of the fifth century combined with the careful preparation of modern thought and science. The rough cavaliers who lead the way are indifferent to hardship and danger. With them it is a change from damp bivouacs one day, to snug quarters in a fine old château on the next. They take good and evil fortune as it happens to come, live well when they can, and frighten the inhabitants far more than they hurt them. Then follow the regular brigades and divisions, the artillery and ammunition, of the main army. Guns are dragged steadily forward, waggons block up the roads, whole fields and hill-sides are turned into camps, as the army advances. There is no delay in the rear. More and more waggons come

streaming up from every depôt of provisions. The field telegraph is brought into play as fast as possible, and the field hospitals are got ready, stage after stage, for the sick or wounded who may require help. To travel up to head-quarters when one has lingered a few days behind the great machine is a curious study. In some respects, it is painful to pass through a country so occupied and overwhelmed by soldiers. There are no blazing ruins to tell of an enemy's passage, no women complaining of outrage, no bodies of murdered men lying in the streets, as in bad old wars of other times. But there is a pitiful scarcity of food and a sullen tone of despair among the inhabitants. They have been eaten up, they say. Not a drop of wine is left, not a crust of bread. If this goes on much longer they must starve. Take any small village by the wayside. Let a force of hungry, thirsty men, march through such village, and the result is certain. Food will be devoured, liquor will disappear, the people will groan over their losses, as well they may, poor souls! Yet with remembrance of what has been in war, and of what might be again, these villagers are rather to be congratulated that they live in times like ours. The dreaded foe has been among them, and this is all that has been done.

To travel up from the rear to the front of the invading army gives a better notion of the vast scale of the operations against Paris than any one sight along the front. These whole districts occupied by foreign troops, these different corps scattered over the country, far and wide, are deeply suggestive. Since Louis Napoleon was captured at Sedan, and eighty-six thousand unwounded prisoners were taken, there has been nothing to shield Paris from attack save time and distance. General Vinoy, however brave and skilful, cannot attempt to shield Paris from attack; he can only concentrate his

small force to defend the city. There will be no serious fighting, it is thought, until the Prussians are actually at St. Denis or Vincennes. It is out of the question for the French to risk a battle in the open field with their raw levies against King William's veterans. Marvellous change of position! Incredible overturn of power! Here is unhappy France too weak to take the field, too proud, it is to be feared, to submit to her hard fate. The splendid regiments which should have protected her capital, the Zouaves and Chasseurs-à-pied, the Grenadiers of the Guard, and the dark-faced Turcos, are slaughtered or imprisoned. Some are shut up in Metz, some have tramped away through the rain and mud from Sedan under the escort of Bavarian cavalry. Never was a stranger confusion of misfortunes than the capture of the Emperor away from his Guard—the Emperor in Sedan, the Guard in Metz—and the leaving of Paris utterly exposed, whilst France is still eager to resist any dismemberment.

If we look round to see how the game must now be played, we find that the Germans are advancing in open order over the whole country to the west of the capital. Their force is well in hand, and could be collected at a day's notice. But as France is paralyzed for the time, it is better to move in open order for the comfort and nourishment of the troops. You will probably hear of a move to the southward of Paris, just as there has been a move to the southward of Metz, and of the army of MacMahon at Sedan. When Paris is cut off from the rest of France, when its water supply is stopped and its immense population is threatened with famine, there will be a question of surrender. Already the Prussian light horsemen are working round on both flanks, and they are expected to cut the last remaining railway line in another day. It is not thought that heavy guns will

be brought up to batter the French defences, because the city is to be reduced by a blockade rather than by a siege.

The château of the Duke de la Rochefoucauld has been the Crown Prince's head-quarters in Montmirail, a spacious building, handsomely furnished. This château is one of the best quarters that his Royal Highness has had since the beginning of the war. There is a large park-like garden with well-grown timber, and with a beautiful view across the neighbouring valley. The fact of foreign conquest and foreign occupation is best realized when Prussian helmets and Prussian uniforms are seen in these stately dwellings of the French nobility. There can be no doubt about it. Here are the invaders in the very midst of French life, in the very richest parts of *La Belle France*. On yonder hill is the monument to the battle of Montmirail in 1814. Napoleon I. surprised the Prussians and defeated them with great loss. I have spoken with an old peasant who remembers the fight. "Ah!" says he, "it was a victory for us that time, sir; Napoleon was there." And then, as if to prevent any mistake, he adds: "Napoleon the First, I mean. You know, he could beat the Prussians." Poor old peasant! 'tis a sorry comfort.

From Coulommiers the same Correspondent wrote, on the 16th of August:—

Since I wrote to you from the little town of Montmirail, our last halting-place, twenty-four miles have been struck off the short distance to the French capital. In another twenty-four miles we shall be almost within range of the outlying forts. Two more such marches would bring us to the region of Versailles. The plot thickens day by day, and there is no doubt but that the coil of the blockade is about to be tightly drawn round the doomed

city. King William has come from Rheims to Château Thierry, and will be in Meaux either to-morrow or on Sunday, whilst the Crown Prince moves more to the southward, thrusting his forces between Paris and the rest of France. Within a week the blockade will be as complete as so vast a circle will admit. Every possible avenue of approach will be threatened by the Germans, and most of them will be strongly occupied. The French Government will have to abandon its capital for fear of being cut off from France without the walls, or to abandon France without the walls that it may superintend the defence of the capital. You may, perhaps, hear that General Vinoy, or some other French commander, is manœuvring to the southward of the German line, to draw away the assailants from Paris. But unless he can turn the tide of success which has borne the Germans forward thus far into the heart of France, he will only waste his efforts in a vain attempt. Paris is not to be besieged. No heavy guns are to be brought against it, no batteries erected. This intolerable loss and discomfort of a blockade, however roughly maintained, is thought enough to bring the capital to terms. If there were nothing but troops of lancers threatening the railways and cutting off the supply of fruit from the neighbouring gardens, a city like Paris would soon be ruined. Add the whole deprivation that threatening the railways must produce, and you have a sum of misery which it would require dauntless heroism to endure. The Germans need never come within sight of the ramparts. They may content themselves with marching and counter-marching in the suburban districts, and Paris will still be at their mercy. I know how many of your readers have questioned anxiously whether there was danger of destruction to the monuments they have so often admired, whether the gay busy capital of France

would actually be bombarded and taken by storm. As far as now appears, I can answer them that neither bombardment nor assault are likely events, but that an equally deadly pressure will be brought to bear by means of a distant blockade.

The German line of march in the very heart of France is a curious historical study. Groups of fine strapping fellows, of from thirty to fifty years of age, lounge about the corners of the village streets, or stand half-awed, half-defiant, in the doors of the houses. They are just such material as ought to be in a French Landwehr. But they have neither weapons nor drill. Some have served in the regular army, and these scowl most fiercely at the invaders, yet even these are utterly unprepared and out of training. The uniform coat has so long given place to the blouse, that they have slipped back into their native condition of peaceful cultivators of the soil. Monsieur le Maire, or Monsieur le Curé, has them always under his eye. They are safe, quiet bodies, who could no more get up a guerilla war than could a village full of our English rustics. We hear about Francs-tireurs, and desperate deeds to be done to every foreigner who ventures out alone. But, to their honour be it said, the French peasants take very slowly to such ways. I have heard of cases of "bushwhacking," and I am aware that some roads are far from safe. This is the most that I can say on the dangerous side. On the other side—or the side of painting things in tamer colours—it is certain that as a whole the war is not a war of partisans, of ambuscades and surprises. The one great surprise has been, that of the French nation from first to last, and being surprised, outdone, and marched over, this French nation takes its sufferings with patient logic. *À la guerre comme à la guerre*, as I have before said, is the great motto of the time. Monsieur le Maire advises his people to pay

the contributions quietly, though this particular Maire of Coulommiers is under arrest for failing to do so. Monsieur le Curé stands by his flock in the hour of trouble—comforts and encourages them to bear what must be borne; and the villages are spared the additional troubles of martial law and fierce retaliation. It is only a few days ago that I saw General von Moltke driving into Rheims late in the day, quite alone in a carriage, with no escort of any kind. At another time I saw one Prussian soldier on foot calmly halting in a village full of Frenchmen, to light his pipe at the inn-door.

A Special Correspondent (afterwards the Correspondent at Metz) wrote at this time from Meaux, the temporary head-quarters of a Corps of the Crown Prince of Saxony's army:—

The white fog so characteristic of the Marne valley was still hanging over the pretty town of La Ferté-sous-Jouarre, when about half-past four in the morning of Thursday, the 15th instant, I drove over the quaint old bridge on my road forward to Meaux. All round me lay the 6th Army Corps of the Prussian army, the honest fellows still slumbering soundly in the semi-darkness. His Excellency von Tümpling, the General in command of this Army Corps, had come on with his head-quarters on the previous day from Nogent, and a farther advance to Meaux was ordered for Thursday. This 6th Army Corps, composed almost exclusively of Silesians, has throughout formed the front of the advance on Paris, and its head-quarters have ever been very close in the rear of the extreme infantry vanguard. Thus it fell out that, as I drove forward through the fog, there were but few signs of my having been preceded by any large body of men. As day broke, the soft roadsides showed tokens of having been trodden by a goodly force of cavalry, and

the hoof prints had not been beaten out, as they invariably are, when the infantry men have come tramping after the horsemen. I had not travelled above five miles when I came to a village occupied by a company of the 51st Regiment, and then I knew for certain that I must be very close indeed to the fringe of the infantry advance, since that regiment has formed the outposts throughout the advance. Two miles farther on, still in the thick fog, I reached the village of Trilport, about three miles from Meaux, and here, too, were a few men of the 51st, and a slender guard in front of the Mairie. The sentry shouted something unintelligible as I passed him—it was not "Halt," and so I did not care to pull up. But when I had traversed quite half the fine bridge which forms a continuation of the little town, a "Halt!" in loud and peremptory tones, came from a dim figure half obscured by the fog. It came again still sharper and louder as I continued to advance, my horse having a good deal of way on him. Then the figure stretched out an arm, and, snatching the bridle, sent the animal back on his haunches, shouting as he did so, "Donner wetter, can't you see the bridge is down?" Down it certainly was, and very down, too, should I have been in the fog. The arch nearest Meaux, one of considerable span, had been utterly shattered by gunpowder, and the débris lay in the water, creating quite a tempestuous little rapid. As I was thanking and questioning the sentry, a gust of wind suddenly swept the fog away, and there became visible, two hundred yards or so up stream, the wreck of a noble railway bridge, all three arches of which had been blown up. Gaunt and grim stood the shattered arches in the sombre light of the morning, contrasting strangely in the sullen ruin of their appearance with the busy scene in the intervening space. The pioneers of the 51st were just finishing a bridge which they had

hastily improvised. A pontoon train was hourly expected, but meanwhile the pioneers with their axes had constructed a very creditable pile bridge. Now they were causeweying the approaches to the timber platform with grassy sods sliced from the bank. It was good to see the system and purpose with which every one worked. An officer stood by formally to superintend operations, but he seldom needed to take the cigar from his mouth to utter an order. The division-of-labour principle was carried out to its fullest extent, and the result was speed, order, and efficiency. As a special favour, this gentleman permitted my carriage to cross before the bridge was quite finished, and in advance of a battery of artillery, the horses of which were champing their bits with impatience at the halt in the chill morning air.

The broken bridges on the Marne, at Trilport, were not the only obstacles which the French engineers had attempted to interpose between the Prussians and Meaux. On the previous day I had found a tunnel at Nanteuil blown in, and so blocked up that the labour of reconstructing it must almost equal that of the original construction. Had all the French operations on this line been as thorough as this, the Prussians would undoubtedly have been inconvenienced if their advance should not have been materially delayed. But the engineers must either have been consummately stupid or have built largely on a suppositious stupidity on the part of the Prussians. When they destroyed the bridges in the direct line, they invariably left standing some convenient substitute capable of being utilized by the easy expedient of going a few hundred yards either right or left. Thus a mile beyond the Trilport ruin a bridge on the canal had also been destroyed. But a wily Uhlan had ridden down the towing-path till he came to a handy if rather narrow wooden structure about half a mile to the left,

and then come back on to the *chaussée*, and chalked on a convenient post the laconic but intelligible word "Links." "Links" (left), I went accordingly, crossed the canal, and reached the outskirts of Meaux, where I found another bridge down. This time the direction was "Rechts," and obedience to it soon brought me into the town, where I found nothing but a regiment of hussars and a few sergeants that had come on in advance to take up quarters in the town and the neighbouring villages for the troops. The nights are getting very cold, and rheumatism is not so rare as it was a month ago in the Prussian ranks, therefore it is wisely made an object to billet the troops if possible under cover of some kind. The 38th Regiment was the only one on account of which nobody was looking out for quarters. This corps had been making itself a little too free and easy in the requisition line, and General von Tümpling had punished the peccadillo by ordering them into bivouac for three nights, suspending also for the same time their right to require anything. In the course of the afternoon, the whole of the 6th Army Corps arrived in the neighbourhood of Meaux; comparatively few men, however, being quartered in the town itself, in anticipation of the accommodation requisite for Royal head-quarters, which were coming from Château-Thierry next day. General von Tümpling had his head-quarters at Quincy Segy, a little village with a beautiful château, about six kilometres to the south of Meaux, but divided from it by a more serious obstacle than the trivial distance, in the shape of a destroyed bridge on a branch of the canal. A Jäger regiment formed the infantry foreposts in a line of villages, the centre of which was Claye, about five miles to the front, and the 5th Army Corps' advance guard lay around Coulommiers, considerably to the left rear. What was to the north, except vaguely that there

were both Prussians and Saxons, I was not able to learn. The 8th and 9th Regiments of hussars were on patrol and vedette duty out to the front of the Jägers.

Yesterday morning, while riding out to the cavalry fore-posts in company with one of the hussar officers, we suddenly came, on the great road in front of Claye, on a little posse of French lancers, following a civilian who carried a white flag. On the top of a little knoll the lancers halted, and then retreated, leaving the "parlementaire" to come forward alone. When he came within hail we learned that he was the Second Secretary of the British Legation in Paris, and the bearer of a communication from Lord Lyons to Count Bismarck. He got a mount from one of the hussars, who vacated his saddle for the purpose, and was escorted into the camp by a sergeant and a couple of men.

Great interest was naturally excited among the German troops when the news spread of the advent of a "parlementaire." A report had been current a couple of days before that the defence of Paris was abandoned, and although that had been contradicted, a wide-spread belief existed that the Parisians were not prepared, when confronted with the actual realities of a siege, to let the matter go to extremities. The arrival of the English secretary was accepted as in support of this view, and everybody was anxious for the King and Bismarck to come on towards the front. The Royal head-quarters arrived early in the afternoon, but no information oozed out as to what may be termed the general public of the army respecting the nature of the communication brought by the bearer of the flag of truce; and attention was somewhat distracted from the subject by the pushing forward to the south-west of a large portion of the 6th Army Corps. I learned, however, in the course of the evening, from a reliable source, that Mr. Malet was the bearer of a com-

munication emanating, in the first instance, from Lord Granville, having for its object a proposal relative to mediation.

Mr. Malet was courteous enough to give a few details regarding the incidents of his journey from the capital to the Prussian foreposts. He spent a night on the road, and the Gardes Mobiles where he halted made the cheerful suggestion that he should sleep "under the beautiful stars!" Mr. Malet, reserving the question whether he would have any objection to sleep "under the beautiful stars," if they were visible, pointed out the fact that they were not, and requested other sleeping accommodation than that afforded by the earth as a mattress and the sky as a canopy. This he ultimately obtained, his escort sleeping in the adjoining shed.

Mr. Malet returned towards Paris in the course of this morning, leaving in the same way as he had come, under an escort of Prussian hussars. Those who knew the nature of the risk he ran, felt considerable apprehension for his safety. In the course of the morning, the French had fired upon two flags of truce, and it was just a chance if Mr Malet should be recognized. However, he got among the defenders of Paris without detriment, and I trust reached the Embassy in safety.

From Rheims, the same Special Correspondent wrote, on the 18th:—

I quitted Meaux early on the forenoon of the 17th on my return journey, and took the road of the broken bridges, to avoid the constant stream of artillery and infantry which was pouring down the hill into Meaux on the road viâ Lisy. I found the former road very quiet. The bridges over the canals had already been repaired, but the Marne was still crossed by the pile bridge, although there was an alternative pontoon lower down the stream. No

attempt had been made to repair the great bridge over the Marne. Some little distance on the Meaux side of La Férté I encountered the advance of the 2nd Bavarian Corps, and when I got into the suburbs of that town I found my passage on the direct road quite blocked by a double stream of gun-carriages. A good map and an eye for topography are of great advantage in such circumstances. I happen not to be badly off for either, and I struck off to the right on the road to Montmirail till I came to a cross road, which brought me down again into the valley of the Seine upon Nogent, right into the rear of the Bavarians. There were no troops on this road, but it had been extensively traversed during the few preceding days, and the people were only just beginning to return to their homes. In a forest about three miles out of La Férté, the retreating French had cut down a number of trees and blocked the road with them, but the obstacle had been shoved on one side by the Prussians. The villagers were very timid and, I may add, very hungry, all along this road, but it was wonderful how little damage the Prussians had done during their transit. The poultry still strutted about the road through the village, and there was hardly a broken pane of glass to be seen. Furniture and valuables the people had secreted before the troops had come upon them, and all the chief injury seemed to have been sustained by the straw stacks, upon which the men had drawn freely to make beds wherewithal in the empty houses. Over Nogent the wave had passed a little earlier, and the place had proportionately recovered more. I had no difficulty in getting a fair dinner there, nor in procuring a bottle of champagne — my coachman got corn for my horse by paying for it, and meat, both beef and mutton, was hanging in the open butcher's shop. All the way to Château-Thierry was visible the

eager desire of the peasantry and farmers to overtake temporarily arrested agricultural labour. Except for the occasional traces of a bivouac, and now and then a broken-down vine stem, there was no evidence that a vast army had so recently traversed this road. The children played around the doors beside the old crones at their knitting, the men and women were in the fields working with a clumsy assiduity, and it seemed to me not uncheerfully. The vine-pickers were in the vineyards, filling their creels with the great clusters of somewhat over-ripe grapes; but their number was, no doubt, smaller than it would have been if peace had reigned in the land. There were cattle in the pastures and horses at the plough and between the shafts of the carts. I do not think any one not aware of the fact could have gathered, from outward appearance, that anything of exceptional importance had recently occurred in the beautiful and smiling valley. In Château-Thierry were a handful of Bavarian bullock-drivers and a few footsore infantry men. The people of this beautiful town never forsook it in numbers so great as had the inhabitants of some other places; nor had they any reason to repent of their courage. Now it seemed as if they had fallen again into the somnolent routine of a provincial town. The burghers gossiped on the pavement, the young ladies promenaded in the avenues of noble trees, the lads squatted on the brink of the Marne, angling with a lazy pertinacity. The Hôtel l'Eléphant was empty: *quantum mutatus* from that Elephant which I had seen a few days before, when Von Tümpling's Staff were buzzing about the bottles in the *salle à manger*, and the cook was in a white heat at the multiplicity of orders. The landlord, a gentleman himself of the elephantine pattern, confided to me, with a sage wag of the head, that he would be heartily glad to see the Prussians

come back to stop as long as they could make it convenient, for they were the best customers he had ever had, never grumbled, and invariably rejected red wine for champagne, for which they paid promptly the price demanded. Of course, he spoke of officers.

I remained over night at Dormans, a large village about ten miles farther on. Here I found a considerable number of Prussians, but no regular force—only sick and convalescents, and stragglers, chiefly belonging to the 63rd Regiment. Neither here did I find any misery. At the same hotel where I had found quarters on the advance, I got everything I could reasonably want, and the disconsolateness of Madame only proceeded from the circumstance that she had a son in MacMahon's Chasseurs de France, of whose fate at Sedan she knew nothing. The shops were all open, and the show in the windows was by no means despicable. Neither could the requisition for horses and vehicles have been exhaustive, for I had not the slightest difficulty in procuring a relay carriage and horse forward to Rheims. Perhaps, however, the fact that the landlord of the Hôtel de France had some previous acquaintance with the habit Britons have of paying their way, may have had some effect in contributing to this promptitude, for he produced his horse out of a recondite locality which it would have puzzled a detective to discover, and in which he had two more animals lying *perdu*.

This morning, in and about Ville en Tardenoise, which is about half way to Rheims, I met and passed the whole of the 11th Army Corps on its march to the front. The men looked fresh and well, and the horses in capital condition; but the ranks were considerably thinner than before that terrible struggle on to the plateau above Floing. I was informed that the 11th expected to go to the northward of Paris. Rheims was occupied by a division of Bavarians and another of Saxons. Although this

town was in a state of remarkable ferment on the occasion of the first entry of the Prussians, it got used to the situation in a very short time, and now it looked as if the Prussian occupation was a thing from time immemorial. It was Sunday, and citizens and Bavarians were streaming out of the noble old cathedral and the various churches of the city in all the apparent friendliness of fellow-worshippers. Among the poorer classes in Rheims there has been considerable hardship, owing to the dearness of provisions and the obligation incumbent on them of providing food for the soldiers billeted on them. The Prussian authorities have, however, averted further distress from this source, by establishing a commissariat for troops billeted on all those unable to support them The old Champagne city is very wealthy, and the rich in its community might not unnaturally be expected to do something for their less well-to-do townsmen. But there seems to be no great development of enthusiasm in this direction.

From Libramont, the same Correspondent wrote, on the 20th of September:—

The people are gradually coming back to Flize, Dom de Mesnil, and Fernois, the three villages between Boulzicourt and Sedan. In Flize there must be plenty of wine as well as plenty to drink it, for the *auberge* was crammed with the blue blouses. The females of the families had fallen into the old familiar way of sitting knitting in the sunshine outside their doors. But many houses were still closed up, and here and there was the blackened skeleton of a roofless house, a grim memorial of the hot shell-fire. Over against Donchery the peasants were fishing the dead bodies out of the Meuse, and burying them in great holes. It is impossible to describe the emotions which almost every step of this road called up in my mind—associated as

it was with events fixed so indelibly in my memory. Here was the little house at which I had seen Napoleon alight from his carriage on the morning of the 2nd September. A child was playing on the spot where the Emperor and Bismarck sat in that earnest colloquy of theirs which I watched so intently. A woman was spreading clothes on the path in the potato plot, up and down which I had seen the ruined man moodily pacing as he tugged his dishevelled moustache, after Bismarck had drawn the white cap with the yellow band down over his eyes, and posted off to take counsel with his master. A short kilometre farther on, and I was in the village of Fernois, where I had left for a day a collection of cavalry swords collected from the battle, to return and find the place wrecked, and the weapons gone. To the left was the ruined railway bridge over the Meuse. In my immediate front was the Château Bellevue, in the garden of which I had seen the perturbed meeting of the monarchs—Napoleon bowing low to hide the working of his face; Wilhelm studying not to hide his emotion. Away across the low alluvial plain and the sweep of the river, that ghostly *shlacht-feld* sloped upward from the low bluffs, now brown and bare, but, when I saw it once before, a fearful space in which surged to and fro, in the gaps of the white smoke, the heaving masses of maddened combatants—when I saw it yet again a ghastly expanse of death, here checquered with dead grey horses, and there with gay-clad dead riders, there flecked with the more sombre uniforms of the Prussian corpses lying thick where the mitrailleuse hail had beaten them to the earth. Below it was the island with the château in its centre on to which I had seen the ceaseless stream of French prisoners pouring on the 3rd—the once gay gardens of the château now bare, and the trees stripped of their foliage. There was the little nook where a genial group of Zouaves had insisted on my join-

ing in their supper of potatoes and horseflesh, and there was the secluded path where the villanous Turco tried to steal my telescope. And farther to my right there lay Sedan, within whose walls I had penetrated before the ratification of the capitulation, to witness a sight of misery, chaos, disorganization, and general devilry, which assuredly was unique in the century—an eddying sea of humanity, trampling recklessly over the dead and the wounded, the men now yelling for the blood of their officers, now struggling in fierce contention for a morsel of bread. And still farther to the right I could see through my glass the blackened ruins of Bazeilles, in the streets of which I had seen heaps of Bavarian and French dead piled high in inextricable ravelment, and where I had seen the charred corpses of the women and the tender little ones—a sight I dream of to this day, and wake in a cold sweat of horror.

Sedan has been put in a state of siege, and the circumstance has been attributed, in my hearing, to an apprehension on the part of the military authorities of a conspiracy on the part of the civilian population to rise, and the reason for the step is creditable to the Prussian administration. It was taken with a view to putting a stop to thieving and burglary, for which, where there are still so many untenanted houses, and while a considerable amount of floating rascaldom (chiefly Belgian) is haunting the place, there were great facilities. Under the badge of the red cross, scoundrels circulate freely who are capable of anything, from robbing a widow to butchering a wounded man for the sake of the three groschen in his pocket. It was a mistake of the Prussians to have taken away, with the advance of the army, the whole of that most useful, promptly-resolute, and thoroughly reliable body of men—the field gendarmerie. I saw fellows prowling about Sedan, wearing the red cross, whom I would cheer-

fully hang up to the nearest tree without any further evidence than their hang-dog faces and sneaking manner. For the credit of the badge, something should be done to purge it of these ruffians, and also to prevent its adoption by every dilettante sightseer, whose sole object in visiting Sedan is to see the scene of the battle and prig a dead man's knapsack or helmet (all the more precious relic if it has blood upon it), to delight wherewithal the gaping domestic circle in some London suburb. I witnessed another phase of what I may call the red-cross mania on the road between Bouillon and Libramont. About four-and-twenty Belgians, in a kind of uniform, and carrying knapsacks, were plodding steadily along the road; one of the number bore aloft a banner, while in the van strutted a drummer, beating a rub-a-dub. For the life of me I could not extract from any member of the party their object in going to Libramont. They had marched with equal purposelessness to Bouillon the day before, and for aught I know may continue the same ridiculous see-saw till their boots are worn out, or their feet are sore. Under the red cross there is right many a feeling heart and a tender hand; there are men whom to think of is to think of devotion to the death; of a self-abnegation which is nobler than the most splendid valour on the battle-field; but there skulks under it, too, many a rascal for whom a pistol-bullet is a robbery of the hangman, and it were well if the thrice-rotten chaff could be winnowed out from among the sterling wheat.

When I was last at Bouillon I slept in a hayloft, because every shred of accommodation was monopolized by wounded, by French and Prussian officers who had straggled over the frontier, by "flightings," and by the valorous but uncommonly shoddy-looking Belgian troops. That was the day but one after the battle of Sedan. On this occasion I had to sleep in a waggon, because of the

horde of red-cross men and sightseers. This morning I came on to Libramont *summa diligentia*, on the top of the most primeval concern on wheels I have ever seen. Here I met Mr. Farley, who had just returned from a roving journey among the hospitals as far as Saarbruck, and whose report was not dispiriting. I also met Major Campbell and another gentleman, who had been attempting to ascertain the last resting-place of poor Colonel Pemberton. Their efforts had not been crowned with success. All that his sorrowing relatives and friends can know is, that he lies on a battle-field with men as brave as himself around him on every side. They ascertained that he had been buried alone, but the precise spot they could not discover.

Before concluding a letter which I fear you will consider of undue length, I would guard myself against a misconception which what I have written might otherwise engender. I have described the condition of the population of Champagne as I saw it. The red seal of war has not imprinted itself very deeply on the people of that territory. But it is different with the wretched inhabitants of Alsace and Lorraine. Of the miserable condition of the people of the latter province, I can speak of my own knowledge; as regards Alsace, I make the statement from the testimony of Prussian officers and clergymen, who have often lamented in my presence what they could not alleviate.. Over them the wave has not passed and left them, hurt indeed, but not ruined; it has rested and is resting upon them, and their condition must by this time be terrible. God knows it was bad enough before all the dead at Gravelotte were buried.

The armies of Germany were now drawing near to the capital of France. On the 18th of September the

head-quarters of the Crown Prince of Prussia were at Chaumes, from which town the Special Correspondent with the Prince wrote:—

Our march hither has been an important move towards Paris. The Crown Prince has now his head-quarters within twenty-five miles of the outworks of the capital, and is advancing to the southward of the French position, as though to turn their right and shut them in after the manner of Metz and Sedan. We do not know whether any force will be found to dispute this southward march, and it is not safe to hazard a conjecture as to the future operations of an opponent so embarrassed as is the French Government. All that can be said with certainty is, that we are now so near as to make the passage of the Seine the next stage of our journey. The King's head-quarters are at Meaux, and the country towards Chantilly is said to be scoured by the German cavalry. There was no sign of ruin or devastation along the road from Coulommiers to Chaumes. Villages were to be seen, in which the people gathered eagerly to watch the column on its way: other villages in which they took no notice, as if weary of seeing soldiers pass. But the houses were not injured, and men were working in the fields at some places. We had lovely weather. The bright uniforms of the Staff looked most picturesque under the flickering shade of the trees by the roadside, and the fleeciest of white clouds were flying overhead. At one point, where there was a halt for a quarter of an hour or so, we found a fine country house left in charge of the owner's servants, and the gardener brought out a basket of fruit for the Prince and his officers. We might have been in a friendly province on a tour of inspection for aught that appeared, save only the gloomy dejected looks of most of the inhabitants.

After finding so many places along our line of march almost destitute of food, it is an agreeable change to come upon a small town where bread is still exposed for sale at the baker's, and meat at the butcher's shop. There was a pretty good supply of provisions at Montmirail, but the supply in Coulommiers seemed more to approach the ordinary state of trade. Bread and meat for sale! You must see a village which has been eaten up, by the mere passage of thousands of soldiers through it, before you can realize the comfort of having the baker and butcher to the fore. When a large body of men has overweighted the resources of a particular spot, you will soon see those shops guarded by sentries, and denied to common use, or utterly cleared out and deserted, as the case may be.

Corbeil was reached on the following day, September 19th:—

We have come to the Seine, and passed it by a bridge of boats. There was a fine stone bridge across the river at Corbeil, but the French authorities, with mistaken energy, blew it up in order to delay their invaders for an hour, and the pontoon train had to be called in to make the passage good. Over quivering planks, with a side rope on either hand, we entered this sad-looking town. The shops are shut, the people are utterly astounded by what has happened, and many a chip and fragment has been knocked off the surrounding houses by the force of the explosion. There lies the ruined bridge, half covered by the river. One portion still remains intact, that to the eastern side; and a group of soldiers is collected on the edge of the broken roadway, staring down into the stream.

No resistance was offered when the Germans approached; there were some Francs-tireurs in Corbeil who saw to the blowing up of the bridge, and then retreated towards

Paris. But no regular garrison was in the town, and the passage of the Seine was not disputed. It appears that corn barges were still floating down to the capital when the Prussian Lancers came in sight, and the mine was sprung. Paris was being supplied with food up to the latest possible moment, the Republicans were preparing for their intended defence, and every day was of importance. Yet the fine stone bridge across the Seine was a heavy price to pay for an hour's delay. So it may be said of the cutting down of a good number of trees on our line of march from Chaumes to Corbeil. There has been nothing of this sort in Eastern France; there was only one small trace of such work between Montmirail and Coulommiers, and none between Coulommiers and Chaumes. But on our march hither we saw dozens of fine trees which had been chopped down to obstruct the thoroughfare. In a country like France, where trees on the roadsides are as much a matter of course as hedges in England, it is easy to do any amount of tree-felling across the road. The question is, will such tree-felling be of practical use? In case of fighting then and there, it undoubtedly might be; but when the obstructions are left to take care of themselves—that is to say, to be promptly pushed aside—they are not worth the waste of timber. I was reckoning to-day that it must have taken the Frenchmen longer to block the road than it took the Germans to clear it. The Frenchmen had the heavier task of the two. As we rode by we could see the trees which they had half cut and abandoned, the trees which they had just begun to cut, and others which had fallen outwards on to the field instead of inwards on to the road in the hurry of the final effort. At one place there had been a great breaking up of the roadway itself, and a gang of peasants in blouses was busy with the needful repair. How those luckless peasants must have cursed the mistaken energy of their rulers!

Though yesterday's march to Corbeil showed these signs of obstruction, in way of felling timber, it showed no sign of any armed resistance. The caps and knapsacks, the dead horses and wounded prisoners of a successful skirmish were not visible, and the aspect of the ground told its own tale of a complete abandonment of the obstructions as soon as they were effected. The villages were chalked over their doors, which looked like plenty of quartering of troops, and some of them were full of soldiers. But there was no panic, no desolation. We passed men at work on their fields, and men gathered beside the road to see the Prince and his Staff. Here were a score of children peeping curiously through the garden railings at all the fine horses that clattered past. There, further along, were other children, half a dozen or more, tumbling among the wheat-sheaves which the soldiers had flung down from the newly-made rick to improve their bivouac the night before. What an upsetting, and what a waste of work there is in war-time! Yet what an escape the farmer must have thought it to lose only a few sheaves, if he had the notions of fire and sword which I find common among the people in regard to foreign invaders!

The river flows so quietly on, that it is difficult to imagine the scenes of fierce excitement into which it presently glides. That broken bridge, the pontoons moored across the stream, and the columns of ammunition waggons rumbling through the town, give an idea that war is at hand. But the river goes quietly on, with a broad, smooth surface. The shadows lengthen, and the murmur from the shore echoes from side to side. We are some of us to the eastward, some of us to the westward, of the Seine. The Crown Prince is quartered in a handsome château in St. Germain, the eastern suburb, and most of the officers on his Staff are in the town of Corbeil, to the

westward of the river. The army has made good its passage of the Seine, and is ready to operate to the southward of Paris.

Whilst we were trotting forward yesterday morning from Chaumes an accident occurred which might have had very serious consequences. The young Prince of Mecklenburg, nephew to our Duke of Cambridge, one of the most dashing and active of the Staff, fell with his horse and was much bruised and shaken. He stood a good chance of being ridden over, as the column came thundering on. But it turned out to be no worse than a heavy fall without broken bones, and the Prince, who had been placed in a carriage, refused to own that he was much hurt. Just for the time, whilst his Highness was down among the horse's feet, it seemed that he must be smashed to pieces: but there is a wonderful chance about falling. I have known a man break his neck with much greater ease.

By the 20th of September the Third Army had finished its long march. The head-quarters of the Crown Prince, its commander, were at Versailles. The Special Correspondent who had accompanied it from Wörth to Sedan, and from Sedan to Paris, wrote at that date:—

The fortune of war has brought the Prussians to the Hampton Court of the French capital—has placed them at the very gates of Paris. I need say no further word to make the situation more striking. Here are the dark blue uniforms and the spiked helmets in the stately avenues of Versailles. The barracks of the Imperial Guard give ample quarters to King William's soldiery, and there have been found immense stores of hay and oats, which will make the Prussian horses fat, if only rest enough be given them for feeding.

Whilst we were advancing yesterday from Corbeil to Pa-

laiseau there was a constant rumbling of artillery fire to our right front, and about mid-day the sharp rattle of musketry could be clearly distinguished. We knew that a fight of some sort must be going forward. But it was not until the shadows were lengthening, and until the sounds of firing had almost died away, that the details of what had been done were brought to head-quarters. A sortie made by the French upon the line of march of the 5th Prussian Corps d'Armée had been at first so far successful that the Prussians were hotly engaged and impeded in their march. Then the 2nd Bavarian Corps, also of the Crown Prince's army, had come up and inclined the balance of advantage to the German side. The French had been driven back into Paris, nine guns had been taken, and a most important outwork on the hill behind Châtillon had been occupied by the Bavarians The result of the day's fighting was to leave completely open the whole country to the southward of the capital, insomuch that the German cavalry had advanced to St. Cloud, that Versailles had surrendered, and that the hostile occupation had extended from the Seine on one side of Paris to the Seine on the other side, in an unbroken chain.

Such was the result of the memorable 19th of September, a day which must have brought home the war to the Parisians as no other day of this campaign has yet done. They had heavy firing in their immediate front—a battle, as it were, on Sydenham Hill, with the enemy extending his left flank towards Clapham Junction. This is putting the case in English guise, to make it doubly clear. The danger to Paris is so pressing that the places which I have mentioned do not inaptly suggest the state of things. Yesterday's battle was fought on a hill nearer to Paris than is Sydenham Hill to the centre of London. When the redoubt behind Châtillon was occupied there was a

full view of Paris, the city being spread out like a map at the feet of the victorious Bavarians. There it lay, the great, beautiful city, spread, in a mass of white houses, for miles to the northward. We could realize this better when the Prince rode out to-day to view the position. But it was known yesterday evening that the 5th Corps and the Bavarians had gone very near to Paris. At our quarters, in the almost deserted village of Palaiseau, we heard orderlies and aides-de-camp galloping to the Prince with news. There was news from Châtillon and news from Versailles. All had gone well—the army had taken up its position firmly to the south of Paris, and the desperate effort of the French to check the forward movement had been repulsed.

Early this morning the whole Staff was on its way to the hill from which Paris could be seen. Whilst the baggage and the travelling carriages of head-quarters marched straight to Versailles, the Prince, with his Staff, rode over the field of battle of the 19th, and visited the hill behind Châtillon. This was another of the lovely days which we have lately enjoyed. All the country was bathed in sunshine, and there was more than enough of dust along the road. We passed through pleasant valleys, with châteaux and gardens thickly scattered about them, and came to ambulance waggons full of wounded men. The houses were occupied as hospitals, and many a poor fellow with bandaged head, or with his arm in a sling, came to the garden gates to salute the Prince. More than once His Highness stopped to speak to the wounded, and they seemed much pleased by the notice that was taken of them. They had done their duty well, and deserved a share of praise.

From the four cross-roads at Le Petit Bicêtre to the slope eastward of Chatenay there were grizzly traces of yesterday's fight. Dead men lay here and there in the fields,

hospital waggons were halted by the roadside with relief for those who still lived, and fragments of weapons were to be seen in all directions. The village of Chatenay was utterly abandoned by its inhabitants, the houses gutted, and everything smashed. On the road to Châtillon the trees were felled, the ground broken up, and evident preparation made for defence. Then we came to the unfinished outwork on the hill behind Châtillon, from whence Paris could be seen. Here was a view of the whole city—the dome of the Invalides and the towers of Notre Dame were clearly visible, and the distance was such that a long-range gun would carry into Paris. The Bavarians were busy completing the defences of the outwork, to turn them against the city at a fitting time. Even whilst we were looking, there came a shot from one of the French forts with a roar and a hissing over our heads. It was a wonder that they did not shoot oftener. They would have done so, doubtless, if the escort had come in sight, or if the Staff had advanced on horseback to the brow of the hill.

CHAPTER X.

In the third week of September the German armies were prosecuting three sieges, any one of which would, in ordinary times, be regarded as a great operation of war. Strasburg, the centre of the defence of the French frontier of the Rhine, and one of the strongest fortified cities in Europe, was besieged by a corps of about 60,000 men, composed of one division of Badish, one of Prussian, and one of Prussian Guard Landwehr troops, with pioneers and garrison artillery from the South German States. Metz, the centre of the defence of France between the Meuse and the Rhine, the strongest fortress in all France, surrounded by forts forming an entrenched camp, and held not only by its own garrison, but by the army under Marshal Bazaine, was invested by seven Prussian Army Corps and three divisions of cavalry—a force whose strength probably was never less than 180,000, or more than 210,000. Above all, Paris, defended by more than half a million of armed and disciplined men, was shut in by the Third German Army, under the Crown Prince of Prussia, and the Fourth, now called the Army of the Meuse, under the Crown Prince of Saxony, numbering, it is believed, more than 200,000 men. Besides these, Toul was attacked by a Prussian division under the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg-Schwerin. The war had become, for a time, one of sieges. Just before the investment of Paris, an attempt had been

made by the Government of National Defence to ascertain whether the Germans would treat for peace on the basis of an indemnity for the expenses and losses of the war, to be paid by France. For that purpose M. Jules Favre proceeded to the King of Prussia's head-quarters, and was conferring with Count Bismarck while the Bavarians and General Vinoy's Corps were disputing for the heights of Châtillon, above Paris, on the south, positions the importance of which the French do not appear to have perceived until they had lost them. Count Bismarck had informed M. Jules Favre, by letter, that he should be "exceedingly happy to see him," and sent Prince Biron to conduct him through the Prussian lines. The interview that ensued had no result, except to embitter the feeling between the two belligerents. M. Jules Favre represented that France longed for peace, but was inflexibly resolved to accept no terms which would make a peace only a short and unquiet truce. Count Bismarck declared that if he thought such a peace was possible, he would sign it instantly. But he said France had desired this war, and she would demand another to reverse the disasters of Sedan. From Louis XIV. to Napoleon III. it had always been the policy of France to attack Germany, and rob it of territory, and this its inveterate character would survive under all changes of rulers and forms of Government. It was therefore necessary, in order to secure Germany against attack, that she should keep a part of the territory which had been taken from France. He subsequently explained that the new German frontier must include the departments of the Lower and the Upper Rhine, and a portion of that of the Moselle, including Metz and Château Salins. M. Jules Favre urged that Europe would not sanction pretensions so exorbitant, and that it would be impossible to make the people of Alsace and Lorraine Germans against their will. This discussion, however, was waived in order to ascertain if terms could be arranged for an armistice, that would admit

of the election of a National Assembly, into whose hands the new Government of France might resign its powers. Count Bismarck at first objected strenuously to any armistice, but subsequently expressed himself ready to consent to one on condition that the fortresses of Strasburg, Toul, and Phalsburg should be placed in the hands of the Germans. When M. Jules Favre observed that the Assembly should meet at Paris, Count Bismarck added, that in that case one of the forts of Paris, naming Mont Valérien, must be delivered to the Prussians. Subsequently it was agreed that the Assembly might meet at Tours, by which means the difficulty about Mont Valérien would be avoided. It appeared, however, that Count Bismarck required not only possession of Strasburg, but that the garrison should surrender as prisoners of war. This demand put an end to the conference, and the French negotiator, after making some observations dictated by ardent patriotism, withdrew. France was soon after informed that Prussia would be satisfied with nothing less than her reduction to the rank of a second-rate power, and that resistance to the death had become the duty of every Frenchman. Two of the fortresses named by Count Bismarck were destined to fall immediately. While M. Jules Favre and Count Bismarck were conferring at Ferrières, General Uhrich and a council of war were deliberating as to the surrender of Strasburg, and the capitulation of the fortress was concluded on the 28th of September, when 451 officers and 17,000 men, including the National Guard, laid down their arms. The Mobiles and local National Guards, being Alsatians, were dismissed to their homes, to the number of 12,000, while the regular troops were sent to Germany as prisoners of war. The siege had lasted about six weeks. Between the 11th and 17th of August, the place was invested by the Baden Division. On the 14th of August Lieutenant-general von

Werder assumed the command of the siege corps, and Lieutenant-general von Decker and Major-general von Mertens were appointed commanders respectively of the artillery and the engineers. After the arrival of a reinforcement of two Prussian divisions, the fortress was closely surrounded. On the 21st of August an attempt was made to hasten the surrender of the place by bombardment, but it was not kept up, and on the 27th it was discontinued. In the night of the 29th of August the first parallel was opened against the north-western front, at a distance varying from 600 to 800 paces from the walls. In the night of the 31st of August the approaches to the second parallel were dug, and in the ensuing night the second parallel itself, distant from 300 to 400 paces from the fortress. Those same nights every effort was made to construct the siege batteries, which were finished with the utmost rapidity. Up to the 9th of September ninety-eight rifled guns and forty mortars were placed in position against the attacked front, which almost entirely silenced the enemy's artillery. Besides these a detachment of Baden artillery fired from Kehl, from thirty-two rifled pieces and eight mortars, on the citadel, which it was thought might be used as a last refuge by the enemy, after the reduction of the town. In the nights between the 9th and 11th of September the approaches to the third parallel were laid. In the night of the 11th the greater part of the third parallel was made, and in a very few days the defences were laid in ruins. On the 29th of September a Special Correspondent wrote from Strasburg:—

That Strasburg has passed into the possession of the Germans through the medium of capitulation must have appeared a matter of course to all who have followed the reports describing the progress of the siege. In my last letter I reiterated the conviction that Governor Uhrich would at the last moment resign himself to the

inevitable, and accept the fate which it was not in his power to avert. I said this after having been informed of the intention of the Commander of the German forces to endeavour to storm Strasburg on the very night that I forwarded my last letter. The anticipated result has been attained. Strasburg has ceased to be French. The grand old cathedral, which a German architect planned, will be completed at no distant day by German workmen, intent upon adding another glory to the Fatherland while accomplishing the plans of a German architect. What I did not and could not well know when I penned the words to which I have referred was the exact position which Governor Uhrich held with regard to the city over which he was the military ruler. It was supposed that he had entirely disregarded the feelings and desire of the inhabitants, and had prolonged a resistance which they were desirous to terminate. On the authority of a member of the Council of Defence, to whom the whole truth was well known, I can now state, without fear of contradiction, that Governor Uhrich was always in perfect accord with the inhabitants, and that if, in their opinion, he erred at all, it was in capitulating prematurely. Shortly after the siege began in earnest he received a deputation from the council formed for the defence of the city. Opinions were freely and frankly interchanged between the Governor on the one hand and the council on the other. The former admitted the difficulty of making a successful defence. The latter enlarged on the dangers of prolonging a hopeless resistance. The result was that a common understanding was arrived at. It was unanimously resolved by the council to strain every nerve to prevent the city from falling into the hands of the besiegers. General Uhrich, on his part, pledged himself to avert the calamity of exposing the city to the horrors and the consequences of an assault.

As a soldier who had determined to do his duty, the General reserved to himself the sole right to determine when the critical moment had arrived. He would neither treat nor consent to listen to any proposition to surrender until it had become actually impossible to continue the defence. Many persons thought that the decisive moment had arrived long before Governor Uhrich had become either weary or disheartened. When the fortress was no longer tenable, and when two breaches of a formidable kind had been made, the Governor determined to fulfil his pledge, and in conformity therewith the white flag, which, as I write, flies from the topmost gallery of the cathedral, was hoisted. Strange to say, though the inhabitants had suffered severely, and were reduced to great straits, the resolve of Governor Uhrich not only took the majority by surprise, but upset certain schemes of the most reprehensible character, to which the majority hoped to give effect before a German soldier entered Strasburg as a victor.

No sooner had I obtained trustworthy intelligence of what had occurred, and had transmitted the leading particulars to England, than I started for the city of which I have so long watched the fate with special interest. With facilities altogether exceptional, owing to the special kindness of a German officer, who, like myself, was bound for Strasburg, I travelled thither as rapidly as possible. Passing through Schiltigheim, I saw tokens in every quarter of the severity of the fire from the fortifications. Hardly a house was untouched. A large number had been burned to the ground, and many were converted into piles of ruins by the explosion of shells. The direct road to Strasburg was crossed by the parallels, and it was necessary to walk along the first parallel for nearly a mile before coming to the pathway along which access to the city was alone possible.

The destruction at the Austerlitz railway station, lying outside the city, was thorough. Shortly after the siege began this station was captured by the besiegers. Near this place more than one severe fight occurred when the garrison made a sortie. The fire from one of the mortar batteries was concentrated upon this station, and the numerous carriages which once stood on the line had been converted into heaps of charred wood and twisted iron. On approaching the Porte Saverne, I saw countless marks indicating the severity of the fire which the besiegers had directed towards this spot. Between this and the Porte des Pierres the walls had been breached in two places. After I had passed through the gate, the spectacle of destruction which I witnessed was one I shall not soon forget. On the right, as far as I could see, the whole quarter was a pile of rubbish. There were few marks of fire. Cannon shot and shells had reduced house after house to its original elements. When the space between Temple Bar and Carey Street, on which the new Law Courts are to be erected, was being cleared of houses, the appearance presented was not dissimilar; with this difference, that in the case of the houses removed from that site there were signs of regularity in the midst of the destruction, whereas in Strasburg the ruined houses were literally piles of rubbish, and unless I had known that houses had once covered the spot, I should not have supposed that the rubbish had ever taken the form of shapely dwellings. In front of nearly every shop window were sloping planks, arranged with a view to ward off the falling shot. All the openings made to admit air and light into the cellars were covered over with a mass of earth and straw. In some cases the straw had evidently been taken from the most offensive, though not the least useful, part of the farmyard. The deprivation of light and air, and the

presence of noisome smells, which those who occupied the cellars must have had to endure, must have been not only a severe trial, but also most detrimental to health. One house standing at a corner was propped up lest it should topple over. A cannon ball had swept a large piece out of the corner, and had cut through one of the beams which supported the two upper floors. On reaching the Place Kleber, one of the largest and finest open spaces in Strasburg, the signs of destruction were most striking. The handsome building which filled the north-eastern side of the square, and in which was a valuable museum of ancient and modern works of art, is now represented by empty walls. Nearly every house has been pierced with shot or shell. The hotel in which I write this, the well-known Maison Rouge, has been struck more than once. Being one of the first civilians who arrived here, I succeeded in getting one of the few rooms of which the German officers had not taken possession. Wishing to breakfast, I called for the bill of fare. It was as long and elaborate as usual. I came to the conclusion, that although the city had been severely injured by the bombardment, yet that the inhabitants had been able to procure not only the necessaries, but also the luxuries of life. But I was soon undeceived. The bill of fare was a relic of pre-siege days. I could get beef or ham, or *pâté de foie gras*. Towards the end of the siege, when provisions became very scarce, *pâté de foie gras* was one of the most common articles of food. Large stores of it, intended for exportation, had accumulated. Coffee and wine could be had in abundance, but milk was unprocurable, and butter could not be purchased under five francs the pound. I had not been many hours in Strasburg before a change took place in all these respects. Carts laden with vegetables entered the city. Butter was again placed on the table. It was

announced that milk would be obtainable on the morrow.

I lost no time in visiting all the points of interest, and the Cathedral among the first. To all external appearance it is uninjured. The spire is as attractive a spectacle as ever, but it has been struck in more places than one. The cross on its summit appears to have been touched by a projectile. It leans to the one side. Some of the ornamental work has been carried away, and in one of the side towers a portion of the stone stair has been destroyed. The outer roof of the nave has been burned; the windows have here and their been pierced with balls, but the famous clock has escaped destruction, and the Cathedral is on the whole in excellent condition. To this place the German soldiers hastened as soon as they got here, ascending the tower and exploring the interior. The officers were as eager as the men, not only to see the renowned Cathedral, but also to learn the truth as to the damage done to it. All with whom I conversed expressed their satisfaction at the comparative unimportance of the injury inflicted. They would have lamented the destruction of the Cathedral quite as sincerely as the Strasburgers themselves. It is the belief of the latter that the destruction of the Cathedral was one of the designs of the besiegers. More than one German artillery officer assured me that orders were daily given not only to spare the city, but also carefully to avoid firing in such a way as would either damage or endanger the Cathedral. Other public buildings, however, have not escaped. The Prefecture, the theatre, and the church whereof the world-renowned library formed a part, are now represented by bare walls. I have described the appearance of the quarter which I saw when I entered the city, but this is not a more lamentable spectacle than that presented by the quarter adjoining the Porte des Pierres. Indeed, a

striking demonstration of what can be effected, when full scope is given to human industry, of destruction is obtainable by any one who visits Strasburg at this moment. The spectacle is the saddest I have ever beheld. I have no desire ever again to be present at a siege, or to be an eye-witness of its results.

A German who was in Hamburg at the time of the great fire assures me that the spectacle of desolation on the morrow of the conflagration was less heartrending than that presented by the ruined quarters of Strasburg. From the Porte des Pierres to the Porte Nationale, a distance of half a mile, hardly a single wall is standing of the hundreds of houses which formerly covered this space. Here and there a single house was still erect. I entered one of them. Shells had passed through the walls or had fallen through the roof. Some had exploded as they entered, and had converted the interior into a wreck. Fragments of curtains, of broken glass and crockery, of bedding, books, and furniture were curiously intermingled with bricks, plaster, and wood. In one corner a few newspapers had escaped destruction. They had probably been lying on the table when the projectile which had done the damage entered the house and exploded. The last was dated the 8th of September. An old Dutch clock remained against the half-ruined wall. The hands pointed to a quarter to nine. As the clock had evidently been injured by falling stones and plaster, this probably indicates the hour at which the occurrence took place. The fire from the besieging batteries being always most severe at night, and very trifling in the morning, it is probable that this particular house was rendered uninhabitable at a quarter to nine on the night of September the 8th. The upper rooms had been filled with a collection of stuffed birds and preserved insects. A ball, or a fragment of a shell, had passed through a case of butterflies

posts were at La Grange aux Bois. The left of the 1st Army Corps lies in Colombey, which is also considerably burnt, feeling the right of the 7th in Mercy-la-Haut. Its second line extends to the northward in the villages of Ogy, Flanville, Retonfay, Gras, and Ste. Barbe. The first line lies in Coiney, Montoy, Noisseville, Servigny, and Failly. The whole of this latter line is within range of the great guns of the great Metz outwork of St. Julien, which occupies the summit of a mamelon. Between the first and second line there is only an interval of about a mile. To the front there lie, first the foreposts, then the *feldwachts*, and lastly the single sentries, within 800 yards of St. Julien. The first line occupies a continuous entrenchment, the continuation of which runs right round Metz. All the villages are roughly fortified by barricades, *chevaux-de-frise*, &c.; holes are broken through all the houses for firing, and, indeed, every village forms a very respectable, if rough and ready, *festung*. The foreposts lie either in single houses, also well fortified by entrenchments and barricades, or in the field behind earthworks of no inconsiderable magnitude. The *feldwachts* (field-watches) chiefly occupy woods or the gardens of châteaux. A *feldwacht* which may be taken as typical is at Lauvalliere, an isolated brewery on the great route, two kilometres nearer Metz than Montoy. Here lie two companies, arms in hand, and ready for a sortie from the enemy at any moment. To the left, at the hamlet of La Plaucette, is another *feldwacht* in a deep ravine. Here I had to dismount and grope up the slope beyond to the knoll on which the solitary sentry kept his watch within easy shot of a Chassepôt from the ramparts of Fort St. Julien. We could see with the naked eye the Frenchmen moving about the fortress and circulating about the environs both of it and of the town, which lies to the southward of it, the great eminence of Mont

St. Quentin, with its mass of fortifications on the summit, dominating the whole valley from the farther side of the Moselle. All the front which I traversed was pitted over with the craters of shells. The men of one of the regiments were erecting quite permanent barracks of wood, the sides covered with earth, a little way in the rear of Lauvalliere. To the north, Noisseville is densely filled with Prussian troops; Nouilly, which lies between it and St. Julien, is neutral ground, occupied by neither army, while the French are in force in Mey, which is still nearer the fortress. We went forward to the edge of a wood near Mey, accompanied by two Prussian patrol-dragoons, and got a warning to go back in the shape of a sharp fusilade from out of a garden in the environs of Mey. To complete the narrative of the localities, the environment is taken up on the right of the 1st Army Corps by the Landwehr Division, consisting of three brigades, each six battalions strong, under the command of General von Kummer. They cover the ground round nearly to the Moselle on the north; but of their dispositions I shall be able to write with greater accuracy to-morrow after a visit. The General commanding the 1st Army Corps, His Excellency von Manteuffel, lies in Ste. Barbe, a little to our north. As the second officer commanding hereabout, he has the nominal command of all the army on this side the Moselle since the departure of General von Steinmetz, who also had his quarters in Ste. Barbe. Our immediate commander is General von Pritsolwitz, who is over the Second Division of the 1st Army Corps, and who has his quarters two kilometres behind us, in the little village of Puche, where likewise is the post.

With the exception of the little spurt of fire which we rather wantonly drew from Mey, to-day has passed in extreme quietude, as also did yesterday, with the exception of a few outpost skirmishes. On the 28th, however,

there was a fight of some considerable magnitude. The Prussian foreposts occupied in no great strength the village of Colombey, where there are three large châteaux, in the upper stories of which there had been left by the aborigines a considerable store of grain. They have taken refuge in Metz, and probably acquainted the French of the existence of these stores. Anyhow, in the afternoon of the 28th the French, in large numbers, and covered by the artillery of St. Julien, made a dash at Colombey, their advance followed by a number of empty waggons. For once they surprised the comparatively weak Prussian foreposts, and drove them out of Colombey. Covering their operations by throwing forward tirailleurs into the woods to the front and towards La Planchette, they filled the waggons with the grain and started them on the return journey. But, meanwhile, the Prussian artillery had come to the front, and the shells fell thick among the Frenchmen in Colombey and the convoy on the road. The former scuttled back in great haste under the guns of St. Julien; the waggons went on at a gallop, but out of thirty-six only fourteen succeeded in getting safe off. The rest were arrested *in transi*
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Deserters and the Prussian prisoners whom Bazaine has sent back, concur in representing the condition of the troops inside and around Metz as being very bad in the matter of food. They are living chiefly on horseflesh, and have neither flour, rice, nor salt—the latter want being the subject of much complaint. The discipline of the troops is represented as good, and the *morale* of a character very different to that of the disorganized horde I saw throw down their arms at Sedan. But the Prussian returned prisoners unite in abusing the domineering greed of the French officers, who care nothing, comparatively, for their men, provided their own wants are satisfied. This selfishness seems forcibly to have struck the honest Prussians, who are used to treatment so different.

Between the foreposts of the two armies a tolerably genial feeling prevailed till the action of the 28th, which I have referred to. My friends here tell me that a Prussian mounted patrol the other day left a note under a stone addressed to the French officer in command of the foreposts, asking whether he could accommodate the Prussian forepost officer with a bottle of champagne. At [illegible] round the bottle of champagne was duly found, [illegible] knot of salt, which, of course, [illegible]tness and completeness of [illegible]is a great feature of the [illegible]uses of its success. At [illegible] to the post occupied [illegible]ving sentry. Here it [illegible]ts, leaving a strong [illegible] distance of two or [illegible]aversed by cavalry [illegible]ng the sleeping [illegible]nce is not at all [illegible]hot and round

of bootless Chassepôt firing in the dark—the daring Uhlan dashes out through the red legs, back to his supports. Talking of Chassepôts, I may mention that the Prussian forepost troops are now extensively armed with these weapons, to enable them to cope on equal terms with the French Tirailleurs. Of the 2nd Battalion of the 4th Regiment seventy-five men are so armed, or rather seventy-five Chassepôts are in use and are transferred from *feldwacht* to *feldwacht*, as the changes of guard are made. One whole regiment (the 35th) is armed with the Chassepôt. This settles the question as to the relative merits of the Chassepôt and the Needle-gun in the eyes of the Prussians. Immediately after the war, I doubt not there will be a general conversion—the operation will not be difficult.

All this district is dotted over with the graves of the battle fought by Steinmetz on the 14th of August, and of men who have fallen in the various forepost fights. All the way to Courcelles it is a scene of utter barrenness and desolation, traversed everywhere by tracks of waggons, chequered by abandoned bivouacs, the leafy bowers of which, plastered with mud, stand forlorn and unused, all the troops being now under cover except the foreposts, who must necessarily remain in the open. They never sleep—their vigilance extends right round the clock for the four-and-twenty hours. Very few of the inhabitants still remain in the district, and of these the plight is very miserable. The Prussians keep them alive by serving out victuals to them, otherwise they would starve. Agricultral occupations are at a standstill; the vineyards, traversed by waggon roads and cut in two by entrenchments, are utterly ruined. The houses are wrecks, many of them whole or partially burned by fires kindled by the shells. In Courcelles, the only living thing not Prussian is a mongrel which stuck to his kennel when his

owner ran away. The Prussians have christened him "Courcelles," and the time-serving rogue is already more than half Prussian—traitor that he is. I found a considerable number of inhabitants in the forepost village of Montoy; an old woman sat placidly before the door knitting stockings, while the troops lined the entrenchment just in her front. I suppose she had got so used to shells and bullets that she did not mind them, or it might be that her despair had culminated in a sort of apathy of equanimity. For the poor folks around here something must be done by the philanthropists of the world, else they will inevitably starve the moment that the Prussians withdraw. If they had horses, and if the bullets were not sweeping their farms, yet this year they durst not put a spade into the ground. Every field holds the "sacred and precious seed" that will germinate never till the last trumpet sounds. No more Christian act could be done by those who care not for the nationality when misery and want threaten their fellow-men, than to contribute to their relief.

September 30th, morning.—Yesterday evening it was officially made known to the troops that the French were constructing three bridges across the Moselle to the westward of Fort St. Julien, it was believed with a view to a sortie in the direction of Maison Rouge and Woippy. About four o'clock this morning the sky became brilliantly illuminated with the shells under the fire of which they attempted to carry out their design, and with the return fire with which the Prussian artillery met it. In the thick darkness the effect, as seen from this point (about four miles away), was magnificent. Between the louder crashes of the cannon was heard the sharper rattle of the musketry fire, singly and in volleys. The firing became fainter towards six o'clock, and by seven had died away altogether—the presumption being that the French

attempt had been baulked, and this I have since learned was the case. A few days ago the garrison of Thionville surprised and captured a Prussian provision train, which was carried into that fortress. The food is more needed in Metz than in Thionville, and it was anticipated that an effort would be made to fight the train through the Prussian environment into the beleagured fortress. In all probability the affair of this morning has been a diversion intended to facilitate this movement. The Prussians, however, were fully alive to the contingency, and they have succeeded in foiling the attempt.

Flanville, before Metz, Sept. 30.—I this morning sent you a brief telegram concerning an engagement which took place early this morning to the north of St. Julien. As it is impossible to transmit private telegrams from Courcelles, I had to send it down to Saarbruck, from which I trust it has been forwarded with correctness and expedition. There was also this morning a little forepost skirmish between a company of the 4th Regiment and the French outposts, about a mile to the left front of this place, between Montoy and Colombey. The Prussians took twelve French prisoners, at the expense of three of their own number slightly wounded.

The Prussian army lying around Metz have obtained, from sources which I am not at liberty to mention, complete charts and full particulars of the position of the French troops lying around Metz. Bazaine's forces—that is to say, the army driven back on Metz after the battle of Gravelotte—is not permitted to enter the town of Metz. The whole army is encamped on the slopes of the fortifications either of the town or of the outlying strongholds, in the intervening country, and in the various villages which still remain in the possession of the French. The forts are garrisoned by Mobiles and National Guards. Bazaine's head-quarters are inside the town. Opposite

us here in Flanville lies the 3rd Army Corps of the French army. Its forepost nearest us is in the wood in front of Mey, and the chain extends southward to the front of Belle Croix. The mass of the corps lies in the rear. Within the last few days a considerable camp has been established on the slope of St. Julien, looking towards us. We can see the white tents, and the red-legged gentlemen strolling about them. Their patrols, mounted and on foot, cross our front so near that the countenances of the men can be made out with the glass. The Prussian *feldwachts* could pick them off quite easily if they chose; but there is an order against firing at small detached parties. The French do not show the same civility. A single man cannot show himself on the advance line without being blazed at by a regular volley, which seldom takes any effect, the firing being so wild. The guard changing is a great time for a waste of French powder and shot all along the line, and Belle Croix spitefully throws a few shells on the brewery on the great *chaussée*, constituting the chief forepost on our right front. Directly in front of us is Montoy and the important forepost, and to its left is another forepost in an isolated house on another *chaussée*, where stood a battery of Prussian artillery in the action of the day before yesterday, that did much execution among the French troops. Another battery stood at the brewery (Lauvallière), which enfiladed them on their retreat, which was what Mrs. Malaprop would call "precipitous."

The few Prussian soldiers who casually fall into the hands of the French, are now never detained more than twenty-four hours. One of the men thus returned has informed me that the scale of rations issued to the French troops is at the rate of one loaf to every twelve men per day—about four men's bread according to the ordinary issue—and a scanty portion of horseflesh. On the other hand,

rations are full and good in the Prussian lines, but extras are comparatively dear. A dozen of eggs costs about two shillings, and half a gallon of milk about eighteenpence, but, besides being dear, such delicacies are very scarce. The few inhabitants left have not many fowls, and fewer cows. Their disposition, too, is the reverse of kindly to the Prussian troops, and some stringent measures have been found necessary to put a stop to shooting from behind hedges.

I do not think it is generally known in England how thorough was the understanding between Bazaine and MacMahon, and how detailed was the programme in case of the success of the movement of the latter. Intercepted letters bear testimony to the fact that MacMahon was expected to make his appearance from the Ardennes about the 30th of August. The signal for the Metz army was to be three bombs fired in the air by MacMahon, and then a sortie was to be made at the same moment that the army of Châlons was to fall on the Prussian rear. It is actually the case that Bazaine was cautioned against allowing the guns of the fortress to have too much elevation when fired in support of the sortie, to obviate the risk of the projectiles falling in the co-operating army on the farther side of the Prussians. Had Von Moltke and the Crown Prince not succeeded in baulking the scheme, well planned as it undoubtedly was, the Prussian armies might not have been lying to-day around Paris and Metz.

Bazaine is carefully kept informed of the progress of the Prussian arms in France. Whenever any important event takes place, such as the surrender of Toul and of Strasburg, a parliamentaire is sent forward with the information. The other day Bazaine sent out to Prince Frederick Charles with a request for some newspapers, and files of English, German, and French journals were

promptly sent in to him. I fear he did not take much encouragement from the information which they afforded him. So grimly desirous were the Prussians that he should be fully posted up in everything that was going forward, that one of Bazaine's general officers was sedulously forwarded to the Meuse immediately after the battle of Sedan, and allowed to acquaint himself thoroughly with the untoward aspect of affairs there. Inside Metz the *Courrier de la Moselle*, it is believed, is still published. A prisoner recently returned smuggled out a copy a few days old, which contained an address from Bazaine to his army. In it he told them not to be downcast, far less to think of disaffection, for that within a few weeks he would turn the tables on the Prussians by taking the larger proportion of their guns, and great store of their provisions. In the meantime he enjoined vigilance and constant alertness, and commended to his officers the sedulous study of the writings of the Archduke Charles, of Frederick the Great, and of the History of the Thirty Years' War, to learn the science of conducting the defence of a fortress. Had the officers received a proper military education, like that imparted to every Prussian officer, there would be no need for counselling them to "read up" now, when the pinch has come.

When the French make a sortie their scheme of advance is very characteristic. They scuttle out from the shelter of the fortresses in the loosest skirmishing order, and with great rapidity till they reach intermediate spaces sheltered from the Prussian fire, whether by woods or by the configuration of the ground. In these they accumulate their masses, and come forward in dense columns. But they have never yet, save at Colombey the other day, and that by an unwonted surprise, succeeded in getting close to the Prussian first line. The artillery goes to

work with its deadly practice, and there is no alternative but a rapid retreat. These demonstrations are always accompanied by a cannonade from the fortresses of Belle Croix and St. Julien, but never by the discharge of field artillery. This latter circumstance leads the Prussians to the conclusion that the French must be short of ammunition for their field-guns; and this seems probable, looking to the lavish use they made of them at Gravelotte. There must be mortars in Belle Croix of great magnitude, for I saw to-day, by Lauvallière, lying in the ditch, a huge shell, which could not have been less than a 72-pounder, that had been a compliment from that fort. It was unexploded—a fact noticeable of a large proportion of the French shells. The battle of Courcelles, on the 14th August, fought by the Third Army, now lying around Metz, when General Steinmetz held the command of it, has hardly received the attention merited by an engagement so obstinate and bloody. It may give you some idea of what it cost to win it, when I give details of the losses suffered by some of the regiments. On the 14th August, and in the minor fights of the 30th and 31st of the same month, and those during the course of the present, this 4th Regiment, with which I now am, has lost (killed and wounded) thirty-five officers out of a total of sixty, and 1,000 men out of 3,000. The 45th Regiment, also lying in this vicinity, has lost yet more of its officers. Out of sixty no fewer than forty-two have fallen. The result is that a large number of under-officers have received commissions. As these are comparatively inexperienced in their new duties, they daily receive assiduous instructions from their seniors. These informal lectures are highly interesting—not a few officers of the British service would greatly benefit by attending them. The troops also are drilled daily, notwithstanding that they are in front of the enemy. This morning I watched a whole

battalion at skirmishing drill, and a right pretty sight it was. The recruits that have come forward since the beginning of the war spend hours daily in perfecting their drill, and the efficiency of the whole army is sedulously maintained at the highest pitch.

The following letter from the same Correspondent, dated Noisseville, October 2, and written in the first line before Metz, gives a detailed account of the fortifications by which Metz was defended, and under the shelter of which Bazaine and his army lay for more than two months:—

The town of Metz, with the great Cathedral, lies for the most part on the east side of a branch of the Moselle, which forks off from the main stream at La Grange aux Dames, and forms the islands of Chambière, and lower down of Sauley and St. Simphorien. A large suburb, however, stands on the first of these islands. The inner fortifications surround the town continuously, with the exception of one gap to the southward, which is covered efficiently by the branch of the Moselle which divides the islands of Sauley and St. Simphorien. On the north of the Isle de Chambière, are two important forts on the inner line, one at the north-western angle of the *enceinte*, the other detached in the plain of the island, but connected with the *enceinte* by a covered way. On the south of the inner line are the Redoubt du Pâte to the east, and the Lunette d'Arcon to the west, both connected with the *enceinte* by a covered way. The western side of the inner line is covered by the great Fort Moselle, on the farther side of the main stream of the Moselle, a double crown work of immense strength and magnitude, enclosing great magazines and arsenals. To the south of it the bastion of Ile Sauley sends out a long spur of fortifications, which crosses the Moselle, and terminates in a redoubt on the farther side. Nor is the eastern side of

the inner line less strongly protected. In front of the *enceinte* looms the great double crown work of Belle Croix, Cormontaigne's masterpiece, to the full as large as Fort Moselle, and more highly favoured by its natural position. To the south of it stands Fort Gisors, a minor detached fortification which serves to complete the circuit of connection with the Redoubt du Pâte on the south. Thus the town of Metz is, in fact, environed by two lines of fortifications, the continuous *enceinte* with its bastions and what I may term the outer cordon of the inner circle having intimate connection with the *enceinte*.

Of themselves these defences would make the place all but impregnable, but they are by no means the most important defences of this extraordinary fortress. There is an outer circle of detached fortifications, each of which is the complement of the other, and of which no one can be assailed without the assailant laying his account to be enfiladed by at least two of the others. Let me begin with these at the Moselle, on the north of the town at La Grange aux Dames, and work round, proceeding first in an easterly direction. After climbing the bank of the stream, we come to the *chaussée* leading to Bouzonville, and crossing it we almost immediately come on the great glacis of Fort St. Julien. This is an outlying fort of the first magnitude, covering the whole of the low summit of a natural eminence, and having on three sides a natural glacis—therefore of great extent. It lies about two English miles from Metz, in a north-easterly direction, and a little to the north-east of it is the Monastery and wood of Grimont, the former of which has been scientifically diverted from ecclesiastical to military purposes. About a mile and a half due south of St. Julien, and about a mile due east from Fort Belle Croix, is Fort Les Bottes, a great hog-backed structure chiefly of

earth, which has been thrown up as a precautionary measure, either immediately before or immediately after the outbreak of the war. Its position is very important as a link between St. Julien and Fort Queleu, on the south. It stands a little to the south of the great *chaussée* from Metz to Saarlouis and Saarbruck, while as yet the bisection has not taken place. Forward about a mile from Les Bottes, and on the *chaussée* just before it bisects, is a village named Belle Croix, which must not, however, be confounded with the fort of the same name. Here, also, there are many earthworks and guns, but the latter, for the most part, are field artillery, and paucity of ammunition keeps them tolerably quiet. About a mile and a half south of Fort Les Bottes, and about the same distance from Metz, is Fort Queleu, also an important structure, dominating the main road to Strasburg and the adjoining flat country as far as the telegraph on the elevated ground before Mercy-le-Haut. Turning now westward, and inclining to the south, we come to Fort St. Privat, at a distance of about two and a half miles both from Les Bottes and Metz. Its value consists in the command it has of the eastern side of the valley of the Moselle, of the road from Nancy and of the railway lines which converge behind it. Leaving it, we come to the Moselle again, this time on the south-west side of the town, and striking up due north, we have nothing in the shape of fortifications till we climb the great hump, on the top of which stands Fort St. Quentin, the greatest outwork of Metz. St. Quentin is a complete fortress in itself; it could hold out were all its neighbours taken, and it may safely be termed impregnable, looking at the combined strength of its natural position and its vast fortifications. Not only does it dominate the country to the south, south-west, west and north-west, but it frowns outward to the east, and its great guns would play

an important part in the defence against an attack on the inner fortifications of Metz. North-west of it, about a mile on the top of the bluffs, lies Fort Plappeville, or Les Carrières, the natural position of which is not so strong as that of St. Quentin, because the elevation on which it stands is not isolated, while it is open in the rear, and therefore requires St. Quentin as the complement of its defence. It, however, acts as a defence over a great tract of country to the west, and keeps a besieging force at a respectful distance, so that it cannot reach the edge of the bluffs and pitch projectiles down into Metz. Due north from Metz, about two miles, and standing in the middle of the plain, bounded by the Thionville Railway on the west, and the Moselle on the east, lies Fort St. Eloy, the last and not the least important of the outworks of Metz. Its province is, in combination with St. Julien, to take care of the valley of the Moselle to the northward, and to dominate the great road to Thionville. All these fortifications (except the little Belle Croix), are furnished with heavy guns of position, and it is believed that there is no lack of ammunition for the use of these great fortress guns, although field-artillery ammunition is short. Besides their field artillery, the Prussians have forty 24-pounders on the other side of the Moselle, and no more. Their position, then, is dictated at once by sound military conditions, since a blockade answers as well the purpose they have in view, and by a policy to which I shall refer later.

Our position here—into which we marched last night—is sufficiently far advanced to make its occupation very ticklish work. The village is within easy range of the shell-fire, either from St. Julien or Fort Les Bottes, while the field-guns at the little Belle Croix are, so to

speak, just over the way. The village constitutes part of the line of the Prussian entrenchments; every cottage is a stronghold; in every street, alley, and gap is an earthwork. We are now in front of the brewery at Lauvallière, a little behind the line of which we lay at Flanville. About three hundred yards to our right front, in the bottom of a rather abrupt valley, is the village of Nouilly, which belongs to neither side. Just outside of it, on the French side, and to the north-west, begins the Bois de Grimont, on the southern edge of which lies the village of Mey, occupied by the French. The Bois de Grimont swarms with their tirailleurs; we can see their red breeches through the trees, and they also acquaint us with their presence by firing occasionally at our cavalry patrols when they imagine they come too near the wood. Last night I went on the farthest *feldwacht*, just behind the village of Nouilly, and I remained there during the night with the lieutenant in command. As soon as he relieved his predecessors, he threw forward a sergeant's party into Nouilly, with orders to hold it to day-light. About one o'clock in the morning our cavalry patrols, supported by an infantry detachment, felt their way to the edge of the Bois de Grimont, and then encountered a fierce but wild discharge of musketry. They fell back on the sergeant's party in Nouilly, who held the place till they could discern the advance of large detachments of French troops. The shots had stirred up the three battalions lying in and around Mey, and they had come out on the rampage to annihilate the patrols and whatever else should come in their way. The Prussian sergeant in Nouilly, however, quietly fell back on his supporting *feldwacht*, where the lieutenant stood fast till he could see the Frenchmen swarming into Nouilly, and then we fell back on the *replie*, which in turn supported

the *feldwacht*. It did one good to see the coolness of the officer, a young lieutenant, not to all appearance over twenty-five, but who wears the '66 medal. I asked him why, looking at the seeming strength of the approaching force, he did not give a general alarm. The apparatus for this purpose is complete. A fusee thrown into the bonfire on the edge of the *replie* post would bring 40,000 men under arms in ten minutes, and the artillery galloping to the front in a quarter of an hour. But it was exactly the responsibility of such a general disturbance that prevented him from crying "Wolf"—although, to my judgment, there seemed cause enough. The event proved how wisely Lieutenant von Versin had learned to calculate contingencies. The French were content temporarily to occupy Nouilly, and after a brief stay fell back on their original position at Mey. But if he refrained from giving the alarm, he did not allow a single precaution to escape him. His company was extended in skirmishing order on both sides of the post, ready to retard the French advance should it have taken place. As it was, a great number of shots were exchanged, but no harm was done on either side.

Around the church of this village there is a *replie* post, occupied by a company. The church itself, by the way, is a very interesting structure. Of great age and considerable architectural pretensions, it has been pounded with shells more severely than any building I have ever seen. The French pelted it on one side, the Prussians on the other. The steeple was originally square, now it is roughly round; there are great gaps in the walls and holes in the roof, and the birds are singing merrily in the half-ruined structure. The *curé* has remained by his church, and, strange to say, his residence has escaped with very little damage. The colonel is his guest, or

rather he is the colonel's guest, for he has nothing to eat but what is purveyed by our worthy *Oberst*. The good *curé* speaks German fluently, and gets a salute from everybody he passes; he takes the firing very coolly, and seems in remarkably good spirits, all things considered. But to return to my *replie* round the shattered church. Of the officer who was in charge of it for the day I am here the especial guest, and I found my way into his shanty after coming off *replie* in the morning. Till about one o'clock all was quiet—the men lay about on the straw, smoking or sleeping, and the cavalry videttes, a hundred yards to our front, circled leisurely. Suddenly there came a spattering Chassepôt fire from the riflemen on the little Belle Croix, directed against an infantry patrol which was beating the foreground. The bullets came whistling over the *replie* post as the lieutenant and myself jumped up to see what was the matter. One hit the ground a little to our front, ricochetted between us, and lodged in the arm of a soldier who was lying down a little in our rear. The order was for all to get under cover immediately, but Lieutenant Werth had some difficulty in getting obeyed, so eager were his fellows to see what was going on. He himself stood coolly exposed as the bullets came whistling by, minding them no more than if they had been so many buzzing flies. Firing with the French is infectious, and it was taken up all along the line as far as Mey, for what reason it was impossible to say. The Prussians did not think it worth while to reply, and the videttes phlegmatically continued their circling. In about an hour the French fire died away, having, so far as I am aware, occasioned no casualty, save the wound to the man in our *replie*.

About two o'clock we observed that a Prussian battery, stationed across the valley at a place named Longeau,

about a mile nearer Metz than St. Germains (where was finished the battle of Gravelotte), and on the great road between Metz and Paris, was firing shells down into the valley below. Everybody expected to see St. Quentin interfere with this game, which it could easily have done, for Longeau is not above a mile and a half from that fort; but its grim sides remained without a single wreath of smoke, while the white puffs continued rising rapidly from the battery at Longeau. Presently a great smoke arose in the valley, evidently the result of the shell-fire, and with the combined aid of our glasses and our maps, we made out that the village of Moulins-les-Metz was burning. This village is close to St. Ruffine, and adjacent to the river, between which latter and the village there is an earthwork. Our conjecture was that French troops were engaged in strengthening this earthwork when the Prussians opened fire, and that a casual shell set light to Moulins. It burned fiercely till late in the evening. A little burning job is chalked out on this side for to-night. The village of Nouilly before us [here is known to have in it considerable stores of provisions, secreted by the villagers, who are now inside Metz. The Prussians cannot succeed in unearthing these stores, but the peasants reveal the secret to their countrymen, and it is believed that the French troops last night took some food away with them. The effectual manner to prevent a repetition of this is to burn the village, and with it the secret stores which it contains, and this project it is intended to carry out to-night.

During the afternoon Plappeville fired a few shells from its great guns on the west side, and St. Julien also sent a few in the direction of the Moselle, but the fire seemed more *pour passer le temps* than anything else. All the morning, on the space before their camp, between St. Julien and Les Bottes, the French infantry were drilling

assiduously in considerable numbers. We could see their bayonets glittering brightly in the sun. On the environs of Fort St. Julien are observable considerable numbers of horses grazing, but although I looked carefully with my glass, I could not discern a single bullock.

Flanville, Oct. 1.—This morning, between nine and ten o'clock, the guns of Mont St. Quentin sent a few shots in the direction of Gravelotte, whether by way of a friendly morning salute, or to cover a sortie in that direction, we have here no means of learning as yet. However, a little later in the day, there was observable a great cloud of dust between St. Julien and the town of Metz, between the intervening swell. This could only be ascribable to the march of a large force in the direction of Mont St. Quentin and Plappeville, and it may be that a more serious attack may take place to-night in the direction I have indicated. Between twelve and one Fort St. Julien also gave tongue, sending a few shots over the Moselle in the direction of Woippy; but there was a long interval between each discharge, and it did not appear as if anything serious was going on opposite to us.

A siege is proverbially tedious work, especially when that siege takes the form of "masterly inactivity" on the part of the investing force. There is not much for one to chronicle, except when a sortie takes place, and a forepost skirmish may be reckoned quite a godsend. I have not even a skirmish to write about, and perhaps, in the dearth of other matter, a short sketch of the manner of our life here in the front may not be unacceptable to your readers.

The whole of the battalion to which I almost consider myself as belonging—the 2nd of the 4th Regiment—lies in this village, which is very small. The men are packed closely in the houses, occupying lofts, passages, sheds, and every other available shred of cover. The officers

occupy two châteaux, both of which were beautiful residences before war laid them waste. The colonel's château still has its garden undestroyed—a paradise of sweet scented flowers, with here a fountain, and there a leafy bower. Our château has had harder fortune. A company of men, as well as a number of officers, occupy its spacious chambers; on the lawn outside are stacked the needle-guns, ready for immediate use, and the flower-beds are trodden down almost beyond the power of recognition. A *corporal-schaft* occupies the conservatory, and the flower-garden is converted into a drill-ground. The château was pelted by the French in the battle of the 1st of September—it is hardly now outside the range of their guns—and the roof has been shattered by shells. We occupy the drawing-room, in which are two great mirrors reaching to the roof. The one over the mantelpiece has been penetrated by a bullet exactly in the centre, and is fantastically starred in all directions.

In the grey morning, unless we have been previously roused by firing on the front, the soldier-servants come into our drawing-room bedroom, bringing the morning coffee. Long before, the soldiers on the other side of the partition have been stirring, and they are the merriest, the most noisy set of "Kerls" imaginable. After coffee, drill begins. The young soldiers are at the goose-step in the flower-garden; the older hands practising skirmishing by companies in the neighbouring vineyards. At nine comes *appell*—a kind of parade without arms, at which the clothes and accoutrements of the men are carefully inspected. The *appell* only takes place occasionally, but the under-officers have a minor *appell* every day, at each of which in turn there is an inspection of a separate article. Now it is arms, now boots, now cloaks. The under officer is responsible for the condition of his *schaft* or squad, and he takes care he shall not incur a

reprimand through any want of vigilance. After *appell* the officers breakfast. The feeding is homely, and eaten in a homely fashion—clean plates, or plates of any kind not being plentiful, and the glass-ware decidedly deficient. But there never wants a hearty appetite; and for a guest like myself, a hearty welcome and a frank kindliness that I never can forget. Breakfast over, comes an interval of visiting, gossiping, and beer-drinking; for we have our own "marketender" on the lawn, and Saarbruck is only forty miles away. Some write, some read, others sleep: it is astonishing how much sleep it takes to tire some people. The men employ themselves in tailoring, in seeing to the rations, in conducting the cooking of the dinner, and in smoking in the bright sunshine. Dinner is rather a discursive meal; you imagine you have finished it when you have eaten of the rice, the soup, and the mincemeat in your own particular room, but going the round you find another mess devoting their attention to plums and *schinken*, and you join in of course. Then you go a little farther, and find the inmates of another room topping off with chocolate or coffee and a *petit verre*. Of course you are asked to partake, and equally of course you do so. After dinner is the siesta. The quarters are then as quiet as in the dead of night. In an hour or two a sprightly officer awakens, and assiduously devotes himself to the stirring up of his more drowsy brother-officers. A pack of cards comes to the surface somehow, and presently the round table is surrounded by a circle of card-players, the game proceeding with a considerable amount of noise, owing to a habit most Prussians have of all speaking at once, each at the top of his voice. Those who are not at the card-table stroll out to visit the brother-officer who is on the *replie*, drop in upon the worthy major and colonel, whom they find placidly smoking in their beauti-

ful garden, or watch Fort St. Julien and the French tents through their glasses. Deep as the interest may be in the game which is being played at the card-table, that and all other local interest fades into nothing at the appearance of the under officer who has been over to head-quarters to the *field-post*. It is good to watch the countenances as the letters, hurriedly opened, are being pored over with eager faces. The eyes of the portly Dantzic premier-lieutenant on the sofa become strangely moist as the crumpled fuchsia and rose-bud drop out of his letter, the fragrance still clinging about them as when they had been placed there as a love-token from the children he has left at home. What is that which the handsome young lieutenant hurriedly clutches as it falls out of the envelope, and pushes inside his tunic on the side next his heart? I don't think it is a bill from his tailor. He would not smile so if it were a dunning letter he was reading, and the most gushing man is not addicted to the practice of stealthily kissing a letter from his tailor ere he consigns it to his breast-pocket. Depend upon it the lieutenant is happy in the knowledge that the girl of his heart, far away on the shores of the Baltic, has not forgotten him. The domestic side of the German character comes out very strong in this interval of letter-reading. Nearly all the officers of the 4th are from the same district, and the letter of one officer commonly contains messages to others who at home are friends and neighbours. I was amused to-day by the amazed delight of a grizzled officer who must have seen close on fifty years, when he looked at the superscription of one of his letters. "*Gott in himmel!* it's from the old mother," he cried. Then came quite a gush of interest as to the age of the old lady, and when he told us with some pride that she was close on ninety, the "Donnerwetters" were many and hearty. After the letters come the perusal of

the newspapers and gossiping as to their contents, and the probable tactics of Bismarck—it is always Bismarck who is named. When darkness falls, we have music and dancing. One of our volunteers is a brilliant instrumentalist, and he comes down from his lofty abode near the roof, and plays our piano in the drawing-room. Now it is "Die Wacht am Rhein," the officers chiming in with the words, and the men on the farther side of the partition and out in the environs taking up the strain, till the volume of sound must sweep over the glades and the ruined vineyards to the French field-watches outside Belle Croix and St. Julien. I wonder what they think of the melody, and how they like it as a reply to the shouts, "À Berlin!" "À Berlin!" with which they made the Boulevards ring not three short months ago? Now it is a waltz which the young volunteer plays, and then the spectacle would greatly delight Mr. Spurgeon, who is an advocate for male dancing with male. A lissom young officer, who, if he were not a gallant fellow with medals on his breast, would have made a capital dancing-master, treats us to a burlesque rendering of the *cancan*, and the music gets into the head of a rotund officer of middle age, who executes the most fantastic capers with a suppleness, and at the same time a gravity, that sets everybody in a roar. He infects the rest, and for the time one might imagine he was in the company of a congregation of dancing dervishes. But we must not keep the men awake, and, in truth, nobody cares to be a late sitter himself. By ten o'clock we are all in bed, the whole placed wrapped in slumber, save the sentries who surround us with a cordon through which a mouse could not creep. No more could a mouse creep into or out of Metz. The sentry's orders are precise to allow nobody to pass through after nightfall on any pretext whatever. Last night an officer and myself, who had been out on

the foreposts, allowed darkness to overtake us before our return. As we approached the chain of sentries, the stern "halt" came to us through the darkness. "Officer," was the reply, but it availed nothing—notwithstanding that the sentry belonged to the officer's own regiment. We had to stand till a party came to conduct us to the guard, and then the officer went back and praised the sentry for the creditable manner in which he had done his duty.

Noisseville, Oct. 2.—Yesterday afternoon orders suddenly reached the 4th Regiment to get ready for a march. The report went round that the corps was to be relieved from the siege and be despatched to Paris, whereat there was great rejoicing, and the *cancan* and the capers over again. But the anticipations were doomed to disappointment. Our destination was this place, only about a mile from Flanville, and farther to the front. We are now on the utmost verge of the first line. The whole village is within range of the guns of St. Julien, and with the exception of a few houses it was burned by the shell-fire in the actions of the 31st August and 1st September. The men sleep in their accoutrements, ready to clutch their arms in a moment when the alarm is given. I go on field-watch to-day with the friend whose quarters I share, and hope to see something there worth description. Do you know in England that the Bavarians have now before Paris three batteries of improved mitrailleuses made at Augsburg? They scatter their fire far more widely than the French mitrailleuses.

October 3.—In my letter of yesterday I mentioned that it was in contemplation to burn the village of Nouilly last night, and early this morning I sent a telegram, briefly narrating the successful accomplishment of the project. In no sense of the word could it be called an important operation; but as a thoroughly well planned and con-

ducted little affair, I think it may merit a detailed account, especially as nothing of more importance has occurred lately within the neighbourhood. I think I mentioned yesterday that the reason why it was determined to destroy the village of Nouilly was that it contained—or, at least, was believed to contain—considerable stores of provisions, which, however, were so secreted, in the cellars and elsewhere, that the Prussians could not discover them. The inhabitants, however, had for the most part taken refuge in Metz, and it was natural that they should inform their military countrymen of the whereabouts of the provisions. It was equally natural that men on short commons should do their best to obtain all the food they could, from whatever source; and it is believed that when the French outposts temporarily occupied Nouilly the night before last, they succeeded in carrying away with them some stores. The place lies so directly under the fire of Fort St. Julien and Les Bottes, that it is hardly tenable permanently by a Prussian force, and therefore there was no resource but to burn it.

A little after eight o'clock last night I was sitting at supper with Lieutenants von Hosius and Fischer, of the 5th company of the 2nd battalion of the 4th Regiment. The quarters these good gentlemen occupied would hardly have been considered eligible by a London working-man looking for lodgings. The house had been burnt out twice, and the bare walls were now roofed in with a few planks loosely covered with straw. Door and window were both gone, but their place was not inefficiently supplied with blankets. There happened to be left a tolerably decent table, and one side of the apartment was littered with straw for a bed. We eat rather promiscuously here. If any one has anything exceptionally good for supper it is sure to ooze out, and then the fortunate man has an exceptional number of callers,

who "drop in promiscuous" just as the dainty dish is set upon the table. The dainty dish on this occasion consisted of salt herrings boiled with onions, and washed down with beer warmed with meal and schnaps. Lieutenant Fischer understands no English, but can express his meaning pantomimically in a manner which I never saw equalled. As a linguist Mr. von Hosius has a great superiority over his comrade. He knows some English. It is true his knowledge is not of a varied character. So far as I am aware, it is confined to "Good night," with which he takes delight in saluting me about five in the morning, and a verse of "Lucy Long," with which he invariably essays to follow up the conversation. Between the salt herrings, my German, Mr. Fischer's pantomime, and Mr. von Hosius's "Lucy Long," we were getting on as well as could be expected, when a *feldwebel* entered with an order for Lieutenant von Hosius, which the latter read aloud:—

"Lieutenant von Hosius will parade at nine o'clock with fifteen volunteers of his company, and will proceed forward to burn the village of Nouilly."

Von Hosius is fond of salt herrings, and he is fond, too, of an opportunity of distinguishing himself. The Iron Cross for valour is already in his button-hole. There were still herrings on the plate, and the hour was only half-past eight. Fischer, by his direction, went outside to call for volunteers, while he finished the herrings. The men lay about in a couple of dismantled rooms, and in the garden at the back of the house. "Volunteers to burn a village!" roared Fischer, into the midst of the sleeping "kerles." Had he thrown a bomb among them he could not have caused a more instantaneous and universal start. Volunteers! He wanted fifteen, and here was the whole company round him like bees. He picked his fifteen, taking the men who had no

wives at home in the Fatherland, and then came back to see if the mulled beer was done. By this time Von Hosius had demolished the *ultimus Romanorum* of the herrings, and, as time was short, was setting about getting ready in the most systematic manner. Having pulled on his long boots, he pulled out of his portmanteau the little dagger which every officer wears to ward off the vultures of the battle-field in case of being wounded, and thrust his "Adams" revolver into his belt. Then, with a final glass of the queer beer, he sallied out to the spot where his little band was drawn up waiting for him, and gave them a word or two of advice and precaution.

In truth, the undertaking was a most dangerous one. It partook, indeed, not a little of the nature of a forlorn hope. A few hundred yards in the rear of Nouilly we, it is true, had a *feldwacht*, but the French were nearer it on the other side, by Mey and the Bois de Grimont, and had strong temptations for entering it by night. It might be that he might encounter a force of French inside the village. In that case, of what service would be his fifteen volunteers? It was almost certain that, if this contingency should not occur, the party would encounter a fierce foe in the execution of their task; and it was probable that on their return they would be shelled both by St. Quentin and Les Bottes. I left Hosius giving h order, and went on to the forepost ground, across whic he must pass to get across the wine berg, and down in the valley in which Nouilly lies. In a few minutes can the measured tread of the little party, marching the Prussian quick step, which is faster than that of ar army I know. Von Hosius as he passed hailed m laughingly with a parting "Miss Lucy, Lucy Long," an then disappeared in the darkness. For a while w could hear the crashing of the little band through th

vines, and then came the hoarse challenge of the *feldwacht* rear sentry. Then all became quiet.

The group by the watch-fire on the *replie* ground gave sufficient evidence of the ticklish character of the enterprise. In a few minutes the officer in command of the *replie* and myself were the only persons who enjoyed its genial warmth. Then through the gloom came stalking the major, and after a long look towards Nouilly, he squatted silently down by our side. Presently another form appeared, that of the genial colonel himself, who had been moved to forsake the society of the *curé* to come and see what success Von Hosius should meet with. I don't know exactly how they came, but in half an hour nearly all the officers of the battalion were around the bright wood fire. Everybody tried to appear unconcerned, but it was equally certain everybody was fidgety. The regiment has never yet failed in any duty assigned it, and if it failed now? Nobody liked to broach the subject, but I could see it was uppermost in the mind of all. And Von Hosius was a tantalizingly long time in putting us out of our suspense. An hour had gone—Nouilly is but ten minutes forward from Noisseville—and the colonel's nervousness was undisguised as he hacked at the burning log with his naked sword, and drove his spur into the leg of his chair. The major had taken to walking up and down the inside of the entrenchment, and only the adjutant exhibited a thorough *nonchalance;* but then he was very sleepy.

The vigilant lieutenant of the *replie* gave a smothered shout, and we all sprang to our feet. Flame-coloured smoke at last, and plenty of it. But surely, suggested the major, it really cannot be so far away as that. Why, that lowering smoke is on the other side of the Bois de Grimont, and must be a private bonfire of the French —not the one which Von Hosius was to fire. It was too

true—the alarm was a false one. The colonel sat down again moodily, and the major began to mutter something that seemed to me very like swearing. As for the adjutant, he went to sleep, and I very nearly followed his example. One thing was favourable—the dead silence that reigned in the valley. It was evident that Von Hosius had encountered no French in the place, else the rattle of the musketry would have been heard long ere now, and the battalion, which was standing to its arms at the various company posts, would have been lining the entrenchment with the needle-guns poked over the earthwork.

Another half-hour of suspense, and then a loud "Ha!" simultaneously from the lieutenant on duty and the sentry. This time it was Nouilly, and no mistake. Von Hosius had taken his time, that he might do his work thoroughly. Not from one isolated house, but in six places at once, belched out the long streaks of flame against the black darkness, and the separate fires made as much haste to connect themselves as ever did commanders who were eager to feel their supporters right and left. In ten minutes the whole place was in one grand blaze, the church steeple standing up in the midst of the sea of flame, as if it had round its turret the old motto of the Scottish Kirk, "*Nec tamen consumebatur.*" But, church steeple as it was, it had not the attribute of the burning bush, and a whole pyrotechnic display of sparks bore testimony to its fall. Here and there against the flame could be seen a human figure in frantic flight, and on a bluff, just outside the village, I saw in the strong light a woman standing wringing her hands. These were the innocent victims of war—the victims not of the Prussians, but of him in whose ears the poor serfs would three months ago have shouted "Vive l'Empereur."

Presently we heard again the crashing through the vine-

brake, and our outpost sentry challenge. The watch-word was returned in the hearty voice of Von Hosius, and in five minutes more the little party was inside the entrenchment of the *replie*. Von Hosius, of rather a portly figure, was panting with the exertion of climbing the vine hill, but he found breath enough to greet me with "Miss Lucy, Lucy Long." The affair was singularly successful. The duty had been executed without the necessity of exchanging a single shot. The village, which burnt till five this morning, had been so effectually fired that all the stores which it might have contained must have been burnt; and so coolly had the enterprise been gone about, that a respectable old horse which was found in one of the stables of the village was led back in triumph as a trophy. I suppose the French held their fire because they did not know whither to direct it. To have shelled Nouilly would only have been to play into the hands of the Prussians, and the destroying party might have come from Servigny, Noisseville, the Brasserie, or Montoy. It would therefore have been a useless waste of ammunition to have shelled the supposed path of their retreat, when it was not known in what direction that retreat was; and St. Julien was civil, and refrained from shelling our *replie* in front of Noisseville. I lay down among the straw, and went to sleep with the echo of "Miss Lucy, Lucy Long" still haunting my ears.

I was present this morning at the very interesting ceremony of the distribution to the Fourth Regiment of the iron crosses awarded to members of it for valour in the field. The ceremony took place at Puche, the head-quarters of the general of the division, who personally distributed the crosses in the presence of the officers of the regiment. The band played the old regimental air, the "Hohenfriedberg," and the colours were on the ground. The

gallant Fourth has earned no fewer than twenty crosses already, and the award seemed to have been made with the most rigid impartiality, the men taking their full share of the coveted distinction with their officers. The Fourth is one of the old regiments of the Prussian service, and its annals record a long and gallant career. Its regimental march, the name of which I have just mentioned, is secured to it by a special Royal order, in remembrance of the valour which it displayed at the battle of Hohenfriedberg, fought in 1745.

October 4.—Up in the front here we get to look upon the fortresses environing the town of Metz much as the Naples people regard and talk of Mount Vesuvius when that mountain is in an uneasy condition. For a whole day St. Julien has been quiet. St. Quentin has not emitted a single puff of smoke, and Les Bottes might have been a flower-garden tended by pretty girls. This at least was the case up till eleven o'clock this forenoon, and the martial population of Noisseville were taking it as easy as discipline will permit on the foreposts. To the left of the Brasserie, a post I have already named, lying on the *chaussée* and parallel to Noisseville on the south, a large body of Prussian troops were engaged in constructing large wooden barracks, just in rear of the entrenchment line. These are being built for the accommodation of the troops who now occupy the Brasserie, which has been reduced to ruins by the many bombardments which it has undergone. The French in Les Bottes could see the progress of this work, and the number of the men engaged in it; and the idea seemed to strike them that it might not be out of place to attempt to interrupt the building operations. Anyhow, they commenced rather a fierce shell-fire on the unfinished barracks, and also on the unfortunate Brasserie, under the shelter of which the working party was withdrawn

when the first grenade came hurtling over the trees. The Brasserie must by this time be thoroughly well used to these pleasant visitors, and there is this consolation for it, that if it were exploded bodily it could not be ruined much more utterly than now. All that it is good for is that the heap of stones, which once composed a rather imposing structure, should afford shelter for troops drawn up in the rear. But even this office the Brasserie is now incapable of performing. The shells send its loose stones flying in all directions, and it was thus that several men were wounded yesterday morning. The contagion of firing was communicated by Les Bottes to the foreposts. These began blazing away at each other in a very level fashion, the Prussians replying to the French fire with the Chassepôts, the use of which they have been practising so sedulously for the last few days. Everybody has got so much used to this intermittent outpost fire, that the only notice it met with was a whistle occasionally from some soldier moving about our village when a bullet whistled past him, or hit the wall a yard or two above his head. From firing at the wooden barracks and the Brasserie, Les Bottes took it into its head to chuck a few shells at Servigny, the village to our right, and then St. Julien chimed in with his great cannon-balls. Noisseville occupied an intermediate position between the Brasserie and Servigny, but up till about one o'clock it had unacconntably escaped the polite attentions of the two French forts. About that hour, however, a great cannon-ball came whistling across from St. Julien, crashed through the wall of a house in which most of the officers were quartered, and tumbled in among the stacked arms in an open space in the street, making a hole in which a horse might have been buried. Nobody was hurt, but the paymaster was nearly smothered with the *débris* which fell from the wall through which the

great ball passed. Les Bottes followed St. Julien's example in firing into Noisseville, the latter projecting 42lb. and 64lb. shells, the former confining himself to cannon-balls. It was a great waste of powder and shot. Nobody was hurt, and all the effect was that a village, already for the most part burnt and in ruins, was destroyed a little more. The church was terribly wrecked by the cannon of St. Julien. Already the exterior had been knocked out of shape, but the inside retained much of its original integrity. A ball from St. Julien yesterday crashed right through the altar, and brought the cross on to the pavement in splinters. The fragment of a shell from Les Bottes shivered a beautiful marble monument, splitting it right up the centre, and cutting in two the commemoration of the merits of a respectable defunct villager. The Virgin Mary, as she stood in marble against the wall, had a limb amputated, and was otherwise dismembered, and if the pastor had been in the pulpit when another shell struck it he would never have preached more. So hot became the cross-fire from the two fortresses, that it was judged advisable to withdraw the troops out of the village a few hundred yards to the rear. The *feldwachts* were of course left in their positions, as also were two companies in the *replie* by the church; but the rest fell back into an orchard behind the village. It was great fun to be here and listen to the French pelting the village, under the idea, no doubt, that it was full of Prussian troops. We could hear the crashing of the rafters and the smashing of the walls as the huge projectiles tore through them, the shells exploding as they struck, and sending into the air a cloud of fragments. All this time the musketry fire on the foreposts was unceasing along a large portion of the line, and any one dropping in casually upon the scene would have imagined quite an important battle was in progress. So

little was this the case that the troops supporting Noisseville and lying in Flanville and Retonfay were not put under arms. The whole affair was an utterly useless ignition of powder, and its only effect was to suspend for the day the construction of the wooden barracks. When the firing had ceased we came back into the village, and several of us found that the quarters which they had quitted at one o'clock were no longer in existence at five. A few houses more or less ground to powder in Noisseville is quite a trifle when the whole village may be called a ruin. It surprised me to observe with what extraordinary force some of the projectiles had fallen. In a field beyond the church there was a hole in the earth that might almost have served as the shaft of a mine. It marked the spot where had fallen a shell from Les Bottes. The pioneers dug it out in the evening. They had to go to a depth of about six feet. The huge ugly affair had not exploded, and two men extricated it gently, and bore it in triumph, quite a little procession following, to lay it at the feet of the colonel. The shell was a 64-pounder. Just fancy a missile of this magnitude striking a man full in the chest! It would hurl him in little pieces in all directions. Or fancy it exploding in the centre of a group, or in the heart of a column, and scattering its great skin, an inch and a half thickness of metal, in a shower of morsels, each about two inches square. Till nightfall the outpost firing was continued, but it seemed more to while away the time than for any other reason.

This morning, in the neighbourhood of Courcelles, I witnessed what has been a rarity during this campaign—a Prussian soldier undergoing punishment. There is no flogging in the Prussian army, even during war time. In peace the punishments are—middle arrest, which consists of confinement in a light room, containing a wooden

bed. Severe arrest consists of confinement in black darkness, with the ground for a bed. Bread and water is the fare in each case. Severe arrests cannot be ordered for more than five weeks—it being reckoned that longer confinement of the kind is calculated to undermine the constitution. In war time there is still the middle arrest. A prisoner is sent to the guard, and when a forward march is made, he is handed over to the succeeding guard. During war, however, this punishment is never ordered for more than four days. Severe arrest is impracticable in war time in the enemy's country. For it is substituted the punishment of "tying to a tree." Two hours on the tree are reckoned equivalent to twenty-four hours' severe arrest, and the maximum of this punishment is also four days. A still more severe punishment consists in the offender being sent home to Germany to be dealt with by the military authorities there. I believe, if the punishment consisted merely in the enforced return from the scene of action, it would be as great a deterrent engine as it is with the subsequent results of a court-martial and a military prison. It was a man "on the tree" whom I saw this morning. The punishment undoubtedly is severe. He was tied round the tree by the arms, by the waist, and by the feet, so as to be unable to touch the ground as a support; his face was turned to the tree that he might see nothing, and the hot sun was beating down upon his back. I have been now for two months and a half with the Prussian armies, and this is the first man I have seen undergoing punishment.

"Before Metz!" What a wide, what a convenient expression it is, to be sure! I should like to have some definition of where "before Metz" ends. It must include an unprecedented radius of country. Remilly must be quite fifteen miles from the beleaguered fortress; yet it is "before Metz," according to the gentlemen who write their

letters there, in the luxury of a good hotel—their information derived from officers and railway guards, while the down train from Courcelles halts for its fifteen minutes. Pont-à-Mousson—where also there are good hotels—is likewise "before Metz," and I am not at all sure that Luxemburg, forty miles away, is not within the same comprehensive radius. I am certain that Saarbruck is. All the localities surrounding Metz have names, and there is no occasion for the assumption of mystery or the resort to such a generality as "before Metz." All the conditions involved in being "really before Metz" is a liability to have the house you inhabit shelled about your ears, to have a Chassepôt bullet disturb your thoughts as you are taking a meditative stroll, to sleep on straw, to eat black bread, and for your drink to chance what an enterprising *marketender* may purvey. There is no doubt some difficulty in getting within the reach of these eligible amenities without an adequate authorization, and without this also there is an absolute impossibility of circulating freely about the foreposts; but if one is provided with this, no condition of secresy is imposed on him to prevent him from writing freely what he sees, nor has he any occasion to resort to the ambiguous "before Metz."

Retonfay, October 5.—This morning, at five o'clock, after a night passed under arms in expectation of an attack, the 4th Regiment quitted Noisseville and marched to this place, about a mile to the rear, and the second line. Four days of the first line and of *feldwacht* duty is quite enough at a time, and it is right that the several regiments of a division should relieve each other in the arduous duty. During the night I am told that Les Bottes and St. Julien renewed the firing on Noisseville. I slept so soundly that I was in blessed ignorance of the circumstance, but when I turned out this morning I fell into a hole that was the crater of an exploded shell, about

two paces from the place where once there was a door. Several other shells fell in the immediate vicinity, and the poor church got another blow or two. The 4th was relieved by the 44th Regiment, with whom it exchanged quarters. The Staff of the 3rd Brigade lies here in a beautiful château, which has suffered very little from the war. All three battalions of the 4th now lie in Retonfay, where they will probably remain for a few days, and then go down to the foreposts again. Military duty in Noisseville was so severe that no officer was at liberty to quit the place for so long as an hour. The consequence of this was that I was unable to continue my rides round the besieging army in the company of the gentleman who acted so admirably as my cicerone on the day of my arrival. I could, of course, have ridden about alone, but I should have been liable to continual interruption; and with my imperfect knowledge of localities, I should have derived comparatively little advantage from my expeditions. Here, however, he is again at liberty, and we have arranged a journey for this afternoon as far as the Moselle, on the northern side of the town. We are to ride through the Landwehr divisions that lie to the north of us, and I look forward with great interest to the excursion, since I have not as yet seen any considerable number of the Landwehr under arms.

October 6.—After despatching my letter of yesterday, I made a journey, along with an officer of the 4th, as far as the Moselle to the northward of Fort St. Eloy. We everywhere traversed the extreme edges of the foreposts, and the ride was a very interesting one. From Retonfay we struck the first line at the unfortunate Servigny—that once pretty village against which St. Julien seems to have an especial spite. There is not much of Servigny left to speak of—a few gable-ends of walls, and here and there the walls of a house without a roof. A battalion

of the 45th contrives somehow to find quarters among the ruins, and a few villagers still wander about in a ghostly fashion. From Servigny we passed over a considerable ridge to the charming village of Poix, lying snugly at the opening of a valley which tends downward towards the Moselle. This village is surrounded in all directions by beautiful villas, the summer residences of the wealthier inhabitants of Metz. An isolated suburb near the top of the ridge has suffered severely from the fire of St. Julien—indeed the shells were bursting around it as we passed; but the village itself has not been much injured, and the Prussian troops have respected its amenities in a very surprising manner. A division general dwells amid roses and honeysuckles in one of the principal châteaux, built in rustic Elizabethan, and beautifully furnished—the field-post inhabits a rustic gardener's lodge in the grounds. Vremy lies a little to the rear, in the bottom of the valley, which here assumes the character of a gorge, and the road compels a *d tour* into it, which is repaid by the observation of the admirable manner in which its houses and churchyard walls have been converted into defensive works, thoroughly blocking up the gorge. Leaving Vremy and the hospitable officers who dwelt therein, we rode down the valley to Failly, a considerable village, in which, until a few days ago, were the head-quarters of General Kummer, commanding the Landwehr divisions who lined this section of the environment; but the Landwehr have now gone across to the other side of the Moselle, and at Failly the 7th Army Corps touches with its left the extreme right of the 1st Army Corps, of which the 4th Regiment forms a part. From Failly there is a direct road to the Moselle at Malroy, but by a slight *détour* the opportunity offered itself of getting very close to the Bois de Grimont, which is full of French troops, and of inspecting at a

comparatively short distance the fortress of St. Julien. A Prussian officer in Failly told us laughingly that there were two very beautiful young woman in Villers l'Orme, the village which is so near to the Bois de Grimont, and I am not certain that this information did not operate with my companion as an additional argument for visiting the place. L'Orme is a very prettily situated little village, just on the edge of the table-land on which stand Grimont and St. Julien. We saw nothing of the beautiful maidens, but the place is full of inhabitants, and the children were playing merrily about, quite regardless, to all appearance, of the fact that the place is within 300 yards of the French outposts. L'Orme is unoccupied by the Prussians during the day. At night a small party, under the command of an under-officer, go forward and take up a position behind it. Occasionally, stragglers from the French outposts visit it in search of food. From the shelter of one of its houses we could see quite easily with the naked eye the French outposts—the men cooking or lying down, and the sentries walking to and fro. Behind was the forest, and then the Monastery of Grimont, while over the whole of the quiet little scene St. Julien frowned grimly, casting forward his dark shadow in the afternoon sunlight. L'Orme has wonderfully escaped the ravages of war. Both parties seem to have agreed to respect it, probably on account of the number of villagers who still continue to reside in it. I was told that not a single shell had been fired into the village. But while we were there, the shells were flying over our heads towards Vany and Charly, and it seemed strange to see the children playing in the street, the girls driving home the cows, and the old women placidly spinning in front of their doors, when the missiles were whistling through the air above their heads.

The French respect L'Orme, but they have no such tender-

ness for anybody who may happen to traverse the space which intervenes between L'Orme and Chieulles. The track leads athwart an open field with a hedge in the rear, and the French posts line the wood continuously, at a distance of about 300 yards. The distance is about half a mile, and unless we chose to make a very considerable *détour*, there was no alternative but to run the gauntlet. My military friend went first, at a brisk hand canter. He had hardly shown his horse's head beyond the cover of the houses of L'Orme when the Frenchmen commenced saluting him with Chassepôt bullets. I followed at a short interval, and as the bullets came thicker and faster our canter became a gallop. The horses were fresh, and also desperately timid; ever as a bullet whistled past them and cut the twigs in the hedge, they gave a bound and a shy that necessitated very close adhesion to the pig-skin. I was by no means sorry when we got into Chieulles, a village a little farther retired from the point blank range of fire, and which has by mutual consent been hitherto reckoned a neutral territory —that is, it is neither occupied by French nor Prussians. There are in it plenty of inhabitants, who seem to have got quite familiarized to their strange position, and who carry on their ordinary avocations as if the war were miles away. The village is rather a large one, and contains many pretentious buildings. From it our road lay to the left rear, to a *feldwacht* outside the village of Vany, and then into the village itself. The French outposts gave us one parting salute as we sallied out of Chieulles, and this evoked a response from the *feldwacht*, for which we were making. We left the hostile outposts firing away at each other very briskly, and rode forward, accompanied by a cavalry officer, into Charly, a beautiful village, containing many châteaux, and standing embowered amidst orchards. Here one of the points of the battle

of the 31st of August was contested with great desperation. All around the villages the graves lie thick, now Prussians, now French. The bayonet was at work in the environs of Charly, and in one of its alleys took place a fierce and long-continued hand-to-hand contest. It was very pretty to see how tastefully the Prussian troops had decorated the graves of their dead comrades. They had made them up with turf, and planted flowers and shrubs on the ridge, while at the head of each stood a wooden cross, on which was painted the name and rank of him who lay below. The French graves were not thus tended, but neither were they neglected. Brave soldiers never draw distinctions between the last resting-places of foes and friends. The graves of the French had been surrounded by hedges of shrubs, and the cross had been set up at the head of each.

From Charly we rode on to Malroy, a considerable village lying on the Moselle, about two miles north of Fort St. Julien. It was necessary, however, to ride up the stream some distance to find the first pontoon bridge crossing it at Argancy. Some distance higher up, at Haucon Court, there is another pontoon bridge, and close to it, at Ennery, is a very large depôt of provisions and stores for the supply of the northern portion of the besieging army. Immediately on crossing the Moselle, we came among the Landwehr men. They need not fear comparison with the finest regiments of the regular army. So far as I could discern, the only distinction lay in the fact that the Landwehr had more hair on their faces, as a general rule, than the line troops. About seven or eight and twenty seemed the average age of the Landwehr; and as regards a martial carriage, they would not suffer alongside the Guards. I rode down to their extreme outposts, in the direction of Fort St. Eloy, at a place called La Maxe, from which we could see the gunners of St. Eloy going

about their duties in the fort and the posts which lie on the glacis. The limit of our ride was St. Agathe, on the slope of the high ground which begins to rise out of the valley at Woippy, and there we found the right of the 10th Army Corps, and also two batteries of heavy siege guns, which were in position against St. Eloy.

Riding leisurely back by a more circuitous route than that we had pursued in going, we were near Failly when the sun disappeared in a glorious setting behind the yellow crest of St. Quentin. Hardly had it disappeared when a flash came from out of the shadow over against St. Agathe. The roar of a heavy gun came booming across the valley, and the sound had not died away before there was another flash and another roar. In five minutes the whole slope, for a distance of nearly a mile and a half, was lit up by continual flashes of artillery fire. Then the fortress of St. Eloy took up the reply, with a slower but steady fire of its heavy guns, their roar coming to us deadened by the thick fog which was rising from the Moselle. The sight in the growing darkness was indescribably grand. We sat on horseback on the summit of the ridge at Poix, watching and listening, till St. Julien thought fit to chime in on his own account, and began throwing big shells on to the ridge by the suburb of Poix on which we were standing. Our horses could not be prevailed upon to contemplate the explosion of these with equanimity, and about eight o'clock we returned to Retonfay, on the plateau of which we found the division general, and nearly all the officers of the five battalions now lying here, standing watching and listening to the gun-fire. Soon after eight it began to slacken, and presently died away altogether; all through the night both St. Julien and Les Bottes kept the Prussian lines on the alert by an occasional reminder, consisting of a 24-lb. shell.

The cannonade has not had any immediate effect. Its purpose was to discover what impression heavy guns were likely to make on the fortifications of St. Eloy if used continuously. St. Eloy, if it were taken to-morrow, is not by any means an essential complement to the capture of Metz. On the contrary, Metz could dispense with it without any considerable inconvenience. But it will not be taken to-morrow, nor for many mornings, if its capture is to depend on the effect the cannonade of last night had upon it. Starvation and a direct blockade are the true weapons in the Prussian quiver. These are, beyond doubt, gradually working their effect.

On the 7th of October Marshal Bazaine made another very energetic and serious attempt to break out of Metz in the direction of Thionville, resulting in what has been called the battle of Maizières. The engagement was thus described in a letter written from the field of battle on the same evening:—

Maizières les Metz, Oct. 7, Evening.—I have to-day to give you a narrative of perhaps the most important sortie which Bazaine has made since the Prussians threw their belt of men, guns, and earth around him. That this may be the case is evidenced by the fact, that in the several operations of the day he must have had at least 60,000 men engaged, while the Prussians had considerably more. One of the leading features of the combat was the seemingly casual manner in which it occurred, and I do not know how this can be brought out more forcibly than by recourse to a personal narrative.

Last night I slept in Retonfay, and early in the morning I started northward, with the intention of making the complete circuit of the environment of Metz before my return. I proposed to devote two days to the undertaking, my halting place for the intermediate night being,

according to my intention, the head-quarters of my old acquaintance, General von Göben, in command of the 8th Army Corps, somewhere in front of Gravelotte. The morning was dull and misty. As I reached the eminence at Poix I could barely see Mount St. Quentin above the fog in the valley, the sun's rays striking upon its warm grey peak. It seemed as if a general armistice had been declared. Even the forepost fire had dropped, and Metz might have been in Hyde Park, the French on the slope of the Bois de Grimont or Margate Sands. I rode leisurely forward through Vremy, and Vany, and Chieulles, and as I traversed at a canter the critical ground between the last village and Charly, the French outposts, although they were but 300 yards distant, were too lazy to send a bullet in any direction. From Charly, I reached Malroy, where the head-quarters of one of the divisions of the 10th Army Corps were stationed, and then forward to Olgy, where, *mirabile dictu*, I found a veritable auberge, with red wine and Gruyère cheese to be had by paying for it. At the foot of the garden of the auberge flowed the Moselle in a great placid stream, and I lunched in a summer-house overhanging its waters. A few hundred yards farther brought me to the village of Argancy, where is the first Prussian forepost bridge; and having crossed it, I made first for the Château of Amelange, and afterwards in a direction due Metz-ward, until I reached the farthest *feldwacht* at Maxe. Then I struck across the valley, rather to the rear, first to Grandes and then to Petites Tapes, in both of which there lay only an under-officer's guard of nine men, and avoiding Ladonchamps, by advice, I reached St. Rémy, where I found on duty the 59th Landwehr Regiment. Thence my journey lay still athwart the remotest foreposts to Norroy and Plesnois, the latter village being in the heart of the Bois de Saulny, and my road then lay straight southward on

St. Hubert, which is, I believe, the outpost region of the 8th Army Corps. But at Plesnois my horse cast a shoe, and as the road was rugged I was rather in a fix, when there rode past a Staff officer attached to the head-quarters of Baron Schuler von Lender, commanding the 2nd Division of the Landwehr. This gentleman was quartered in Maizières, and he most courteously invited me to return with him thither and be his guest for the night. The offer was too good to be refused, and I returned accordingly. On the return journey this gentleman gave me some most valuable information. In the bombardment of the two previous days the position occupied by the batteries of German heavy guns was at Frenecourt, near the commencement of the rise of the hills some distance to the south-west of Maizières. To speak more precisely, they were stationed on the low heights of Le Horiment, on the rising ground behind which stands an observatory, which commands the whole plain. Marange, the head-quarters of the Prussian 3rd Army Corps, is considerably in the rear of this position. These heavy guns, curiously enough, belong to the State of Hesse-Darmstadt. But the Prussians made batteries, as Mr. ——— told me, considerably beyond Frenecourt. They had six field batteries midway between it and Sennecourt, and on the 6th they had pushed forward a seventh battery as far as Sennecourt itself. From these several positions the bombardment of Fort St. Eloy had been going forward, and also a shell-fire into the village of Ladonchamps, some little distance nearer Metz than St. Rémy, on the line of railway. Till lately this village had been reckoned neutral territory, but on the 2nd October the French had seized it, and established a battery in front of it. The village itself was burnt the same night by Prussian shells, but still the French retained the position, and the Prus-

sian fire of the last few days had been partly directed to the dislodgment of the enemy from a position which was important, as the occupants of it could enfilade the whole front across the valley. On the 6th nearly a thousand shells had been thrown into Ladonchamps and the neighbourhood, and late in the evening the French had evacuated the shattered fragments of a once-smiling village. The Prussians at once threw forward troops in its direction, establishing their *replis* in its rear, and sending forward sergeants' parties to occupy it, and Grandes and Petites Tapes villages, to which its possession was the key. St. Rémy constituted the chief support, and here lay the 59th Regiment of the Landwehr. Maxe, close to the river, and considerably in advance, was occupied by outposts sent forward from the 10th Army Corps, on the other side of the Moselle. The two divisions of the Landwehr stretched right athwart the valley from the bridge at Argancy, where they touched the 10th Army Corps, to near Marange, where they met the 5th, and to them was confided the duty of keeping the flat alluvial tract on the western bank of the Moselle. This was the substance of the information which my friend of the Staff communicated to me on our ride to Maizières. Here I found the head-quarters of General von Kummer, who commands the Landwehr. The men, to a great extent, were located in temporary barracks, which they had themselves constructed, and which did great credit to their ingenuity. About one o'clock I was sitting at lunch with two Staff officers in an arbour in General Kummer's garden, when the guns of the Prussian batteries by Sennecourt began to give tongue. "Only a few Frenchmen loafing round Ladonchamps," observed one of the officers. "There will be nothing serious to-day; there is too much mist in the valley." Certainly it seemed as if he must be right. When I was on the

heights at Sennecourt I could not see the villages in the valley below, nor the cathedral of Metz. Our constant landmark next to St. Quentin was utterly invisible. But the roar of the guns grew louder and louder, and then came first one great boom, and then another, from the big guns lying behind, at Frenecourt. The officers fidgeted, but still would not own that anything was the matter. But their *nonchalance* gave way when an aide-de-camp came up at the gallop, spreading the alarm everywhere he went, and dashing on to the General's quarters for instructions to guide the front. In five minutes more we were all in the saddle, and, after a short gallop, were looking out on the scene of action from the fringe of the wood in front of the Châteaux of Brieux and Amelange. That the reader may understand the tactics of Bazaine and the manner in which they were foiled, it will be necessary to give a brief description of the ground. From Metz to Maizières there is a long trough, with a flat bottom—the alluvial margin of the Moselle. This tract is about four English miles wide. On the west it is bounded by the heights I have already named, and nearer Metz by Norroy and Saulnoy. On the east it is bounded by a lower series of bluffs, on which stand the villages of Olgy and Malroy; but between them and the flat bottom runs the Moselle, infringing considerably on the flat expanse just opposite Olgy. Across this bottom, at the narrowest part thus formed, lies a series of villages—the two Tapes and St. Rémy, with Maxe and Ladonchamps respectively slightly to the east and west front. More or less, there were Prussian troops in all these. The dispositions detailed to me by the Staff officer had been substantially maintained. Bazaine had laid his scheme with great art. Covered by the dense fog, he had made his dispositions with such adroitness, that when it lifted, a little past one, his arrangements were already all

but complete. In the first instance, he directed a strong assault on Ladonchamps. The Landwehr outpost held the place as if they were 10,000 instead of 100 men, and the French sent their infantry swarming into it, while their artillery played upon it. "Only an attempt to re-occupy Ladonchamps," quoth my friend of the Staff, as he lit a fresh cigar; "the guns will teach them the folly of that, and we can go back to our arbour." Certainly it seemed, if any argument could be convincing, that the Prussian artillery must be doing so. The white spurts of smoke were visible all round the valley. On the right front the batteries at Sennecourt were hard at work, and also others nearer us on the flat, while the great guns at Frenecourt were sending shells at a low range right over Ladonchamps in among the advancing French. Then, on our left, at Amelange, two other batteries were maintaining a semi-cross fire; and from the bluffs, on the other side of the Moselle, between Olgy and Malroy, the Prussian field artillery were also roaring. But my friend of the Staff was not, for an hour or two at all events, to see the arbour. The attack on Ladonchamps was a diversion. Suddenly the villages of Grandes and Petites Tapes, of St. Rémy and Maxe, were overwhelmed by a cataract of Frenchmen. The 59th Landwehr in St. Rémy would not fall back, as it should have done in common prudence, but stood up there in the street till the French, having played upon it with their artillery, and rained on it Chassepôt and mitrailleuse bullets, finally pushed backwards the shattered remnant on to the *chaussée* by dint of sheer numbers. The fusilier battalion of the 58th occupied Grandes Tapes, and it occupies Grandes Tapes now, but the occupation consists of the dead and the wounded. The battalion would not give ground, and may be said to have been annihilated as it stood, the men with their backs to the wall and their faces to the foe. The other

battalions of the same regiment suffered terribly. So far, then, Bazaine had succeeded. He had reoccupied the chain of villages athwart the valley, and had got a few batteries of artillery out to their front to reply to the Prussian fire. But the *status quo* he neither wished to nor could retain. The Prussian artillery, throwing its projectiles from three sides of the parallelogram, interfered with the comfortable realization of the latter conception. As regarded the former, it seemed clear that Bazaine would not have done what he had if he did not contemplate something more. That something I have not the remotest doubt was a sortie to establish connections with Thionville. His tactics were well conceived. From St. Rémy and the two Tapes he kept the Prussian fire engrossed, both musketry and artillery. He sent forward from Grandes Tapes great swarms of tirailleurs, who fared extremely ill at the hands of the Landwehr men. But, besides this, he massed a great number of men. There must have been nearly 30,000 in all on the bank of the Moselle under cover of the houses of Maxe, and he sent them forward to cut through the Prussian environment where it was weakest, close to the river. The moment was a critical one. The Landwehr had all been sent forward against the villages, with the exception of one brigade that was in reserve. But the 10th Army Corps had been crossing the pontoon bridge, and massing between the river and Amelange. Their general, Von Voights, was in command of the day's operations, and he gave the order for several regiments to advance. It was a sight never to be forgotten. First came the Fusiliers, extending at a rapid run into skirmishing order, and covering the whole plain with their long thin lines. Then the dense columns of companies of the Grenadiers, the bands playing and the colours unfurled—unwonted sight. But all the work was not left for the infantry to do. The

artillery left the villages alone, and concentrated their fire on the advancing columns of the French by the Moselle. Bazaine is singularly weak in field artillery, and the only reply was from the sullen sides of St. Julien or from the ramparts of St. Eloy. But the mitrailleuse venomously sounded its angry whirr, making the skirmishers recoil nervously as they crossed the line of fire, and tearing chasms in the fronts of the solid masses of which they were the forerunners. The artillery and the skirmishers were enough for the French. The dense columns staggered and then broke. Through my glass I could see a continuous *sauve qui peut* into the village of Maxe. But when they had once got stone and lime between them and the Prussians, the French were obstinate, and would go no farther. In vain the Prussian artillery fired on the villages, advancing closer and closer in alternate order of batteries with a precision and rapidity that could not have been exceeded on Woolwich Common. That obstinate battery in front of Grandes Tapes would not cease, and the French tirailleurs still lined the *chaussée* in its front. By this time it was nearly four o'clock. A gallant captain of cavalry pulled up as he galloped past me to swear at the French for spoiling his dinner, which had been ordered for four. Alas! the captain will want no more dinners. He had not gone a hundred yards to my right when a shell from St. Julien fell and burst right before him, and blew himself and his horse into fragments. This same shell disturbed a hare, which bounced from its form, and scampered across the battle-field right in a line with the gun-fire. The Landwehr men roared at the sight amid the dropping Chassepôts, and but for the restraint of the officer, I believe that several would have quitted the shelter of the entrenchments to go in chase. As we stood in this suspense a Staff officer galloped along the

front line with orders for a general advance to take the villages by storm. The advance he told me was to consist of four brigades of the Landwehr, with two brigades of the 10th Army Corps supporting. In a few minutes more the command came sounding along the line, and the men sprang from their cover and went forward with that steady quick step so characteristic of the Prussian marching. The shells from the battery in front of Grandes Tapes tore through the line, the mitrailleuse and Chassepôt bullets poured against it their leaden hail, but still the Landwehr, silent and stern, went steadily to the front. I have been under fire many times, but I never knew a more furious fire than that to which the centre of this line was exposed. General von Brandenstein, commanding the 3rd Brigade of the Landwehr, was shot down as he rode close to me, and several of his Staff were wounded. At length the entrenchments were reached, behind which were lying the shattered remnants of the 59th and 58th Landwehr. The fraternization consisted in the cry of "Hurrah Preussen," and then "Vorwärts—immer vorwärts," and the line threw itself to its front in a run. The gunners from the battery, brave men and stubborn, had barely time to run round the corner before the Landwehr were upon them. The guns they left perforce. In the villages the French made a last stand, but it had been better for them that they had run away at first. The Landwehr, with less of the conventional warrior in them than the Line, are not so much inclined to give quarter as are the professional soldiers. With many a Frenchman this afternoon the shrift consisted of a bayonet thrust. They fought like devils in the narrow ways of the villages, and used the mitrailleuses with rare judgment and effect. But then there came the steady inexorable stride forward of the Landwehr, the bayonet lent force with that huge thigh and back power

which is the leading characteristic in an athletic sense of the Prussian physique, and the villages were cleared of all save victors, dead, and wounded.

Retonfay, Oct. 8, 2 A.M.—It is the fate of a correspondent in such times as these never to get a chance to do himself credit, or to do justice to the public who read the journal which he represents. Thus, while doing my poor best to describe the engagement in front of Maizières, which from first to last I had witnessed, *tempus inexorabile* intervened, and I had to conclude without recounting not a few episodes which deserved well to be commemorated. Since I finished that letter at 8 P.M., I have ridden twenty miles. My route was to the railway station at Courcelles, and thence back to this place, my old quarters. In the present letter I would ask permission to pick up a few of the threads which time compelled me to leave hanging loose in my previous letter of last evening. To the Landwehr must be conceded the honour of the fray. They it was who checked the rush of the French advance, by holding the villages till they had not a man that could stand upright and fire the needle-gun. To them also was entrusted the grand final advance which swept the French out of the villages. I have seen the Prussian Line soldiers fight before to-day. I saw them clamber up the face of the Spicheren on their hands and knees; I saw them deploy in front of Colombey and Montoy in the battle of the 14th of August; I saw them stand up against the mitrailleuses on the slopes of Gravelotte; and I saw them dash the Frenchmen back inside Sedan on the 1st of September. I have learned to believe that the Prussian Line men can do aught that any soldiers in the world can do. But it was not till yesterday that I gauged the calibre of the Landwehr. Were I a general, I should never wish to command better men. Cool in the entrenchments, when

they lay calmly in position, picking up the bullets that fell among them—resolute, indomitable, in their steady quick march forward, and then irresistible in the final bayonet rush with which they carried the villages—they are troops to delight the heart of a man with a soldierly instinct. Nothing was more observable than the cool manner in which the wounded went to the rear in the general advance—every man depending on himself if he could walk at all, declining the services of assistants to help him out of the fray. Nor were they slight wounds with which these gallant fellows struggled unaided to the rear. One, for instance, to whom I spoke, was shot right through the lungs, and at every step his breath came panting through the bullet-hole. It might be that he struggled on till he reached the straw in the courtyard of the Château of Amelange, where the doctors were toiling up to their elbows in blood; but I fear his was one of the many bodies that checquered the green fields behind the advance. Gallant fellows as they are, it goes to one's heart to see the Landwehr fight and die. Not like a Linesman can they take their life in their hand and go down into the fray conscious that nobody will hunger because they fall. For every second Landwehr man that fell yesterday there is a widow in the Fatherland now, and, with children of my own around my hearth, my heart swells to think of the number of unconscious orphans made yesterday in the pleasant villages and the quiet plains of Deutschland. Pray God that, fight who may, there may be no more deadly battles in which the Landwehr shall have to take part. Not that, as it seemed to me, they dwelt upon the thought of *frau* and *kinder*. The hairy *kerl*, with the grey in his beard—and who knows how many young birds in his nest?—went straight to the front as boldly as the sprightly young volunteer

who had only a girl to weep for him if he should fall. But they are a prayerful people these Germans, and I fancied, when the word "Vorwärts" came sounding through the ranks, that many a man bent his head for a moment into his hand, as if he were entering a church. And referring to religion, who was this, think you, that came running to the front with white hair and black skirts flying behind him on the wind? The divisional chaplain, good clerics of England—a big bottle in one hand and a prayer-book in the other. The bottle contained a cordial; no man needs to be told what kind of cordial the prayer-book contained. I wish you could afford space for a translation of all the prayers in this little war gospel. The army chaplains have compiled a variety of short and simple prayers for the troops in various circumstances. There is one for men on the *feldwacht;* another, pure and pathetic in its beautiful simplicity, for the *verwundete.* And no doubt Herr Pastor, as he went to the front amid the hailstorm of bullets, had his finger on the page on which this prayer is printed. The good man was out of breath, and he had a smear of clay on his shoulder, for, as he gaspingly told me, his horse had been already shot under him. When I next saw him he was behind a wall in Grandes Tapes, among a group of prostrate men, and he was lifting up his voice in prayer amidst the roar of the artillery. What an extraordinary superiority the Prussian troops have over the French when the matter comes to be decided at close quarters by a bayonet charge! The lithe supple Frenchmen recoil like so much india-rubber before the straight strong shoulder push of the Prussians. But india-rubber recovers its elasticity and rebounds—the French never rebound. It seems to me that it is a matter of sheer weight rather than impetus. It was with impetus rather than weight that we drove the Russians back that foggy morning that ushered in

the battle of Inkermann, and it was also by the fury of their impetus that the French carried the Mamelon. But the Prussians push the bayonet forward less with a rapid rush than with a measured, stately, quick step that carries everything before it as inexorably as fate. On my way to the rear, after the brunt of the fight was over, I looked into the courtyard of Amelange, where the doctors were hard at work. The men lay all round waiting for their turn, and smoking like so many lime-kilns. Here already by five o'clock there were quite two hundred wounded, and those in Amelange were but a handful compared to the gross number that had been wounded. After I had finished the letter which I sent you yesterday evening, I rode with it to Courcelles. Immediately after crossing the pontoon bridge at Argancy a *détour* became necessary. The Prussian artillery was still firing in the moonlight from the heights above Olgy, and St. Julien was sluggishly throwing projectiles on to the table-land, seemingly to shut up their fire. All the ground in the rear of Charly and towards Fany was pitted with shells that had fallen and burst during the day. A brisk musketry fire was still going on in front of Chieulles and L'Orme, so quiet when I had ridden through them in the morning. The French pouring down out of the Bois de Grimont, had been a feigned attack in considerable force up this valley, and the old women and children in Chieulles must have had their equanimity not a little disturbed. All I could hear was that in the front there were many dead and wounded, and I met a large ambulance train coming forward into the fire from out the village of Vremy. Poix had been shelled during the day, but all was now quiet there. A little farther on I came to the rear of Servigny and Noisseville, from which I met my friends of the 4th returning singing triumphantly. The French from Mey and the slope in front of St. Julien had sent three battalions into

Nouilly, and thence had attempted to storm the *repli* in front of Noisseville, but had been repulsed with considerable loss, the Prussian artillery driving them out of Nouilly into the wood. I was in time to accompany a tentative advance of the Prussian artillery along the *chaussée* right under the earthworks of Little Belle Croix, which was chiefly remarkable from the circumstance that St. Julien made no effort to arrest the operation.

October 7.—Yesterday two or three very heavy trains came through Remilly, towards Pont-à-Mousson, containing the siege train from Strasburg. It has been sent forward towards Paris with all speed, taking the northern route by Laon, as the destroyed tunnels on the Marne Valley line prevent that railway from being utilized throughout its whole length. Another train also passed containing artillery from Kiel; the abandonment of the Baltic blockade on the part of the French fleet having made available the heavy guns which had defended the forts of that port. It is reported that the great Krupp cannon has gone forward to Paris. This immense piece many readers must remember as having been in the Paris Exposition of 1867. It is the only one of its calibre ever made in Prussia, and was located in one of the forts at Kiel, with a quantity of ammunition and projectiles especially made for it. If it has really gone to Paris, it ought soon to make an impression; for it is probably the most powerful piece of artillery in the world.

By special request of the troops stationed here in Retonfay, there was divine service this morning in a meadow in the vicinity of the village. The Division Chaplain officiated, and the Brigadier-general was present with his Staff. It was a fine sight to see the four battalions, numbering as many thousand men, drawn up in a hollow square, with the clergyman and the regimental band in the centre.

The service commenced with a hymn, in which all the troops joined with fervour. This was followed by the liturgy, with full choral service. Then the minister preached a kind of informal sermon. He selected no Scripture text—his text was the duty of a Christian soldier in war time. His words evidently came from the heart, and as evidently went to the heart. When he spoke of the friends at home longing for tidings from the front, and yet half afraid to hear them lest they should learn that the loved one had fallen in battle, many were the heads bent down on the manly chests, and many a gallant soldier held his hand before his eyes to hide the starting tear. It was remarkable what an effect the chaplain's words had in stimulating correspondence when the service was over. Round each *feldwebel* there was quite a little crowd eager to obtain the "correspondence carte" on which the troops mostly write their brief epistles, and the post corporal had enough to do to carry the great bag with which he went over to the field post in Flanville. A little after the service I was sitting with the paymaster and another officer, when a knock came to the door, and there entered a great hulking fellow from Dantzic, who sheepishly asked the paymaster to accommodate him with paper money for his bullion. How much do you think he had? Why, counting pfennings and a queer collection of kreutzers, he could make up just one thaler, and this huge remittance the great honest manly fellow wished to send to the *frau* away on the shore of the Baltic. It was only three shillings, but it was the last stiver the man had, and he will go without his glass of beer till next pay day comes round. Fancy an English soldier coming to his officer with a handful of halfpence for conversion into paper-money! But a German regiment is one great brotherhood, and the paymaster pocketed the coppers and gave

the man the paper thaler with a kindly word and look, for has he not a *frau* of his own in Königsberg, whose portrait lies against that broad chest of his? In the afternoon there were company parades, at which the officer in command of each company gave the men instructions in their duties when on *feldwacht.* It was not a drill, but a kind of lecture. The men listened intently and intelligently to the lucid expositions of their officer, and that his words were not to them as the empty air was proved by the fact that after the parade was over I heard several groups of men talking over the subject-matter of the *hauptmann's* observations.

In the evening there was a camp fire, an institution not unknown at Wimbledon in the early days of the volunteer movement, when as yet the encampment was but small, and where Lord Elcho's sonorous voice could be heard over the whole gathering. During peace time, there is a camp fire—or a gathering equivalent to it—once a week in every Prussian regiment, to which the married officers bring their good ladies, and whither also the "beauty and fashion" of the garrison town are invited. "Beauty and fashion" are represented in Retonfay by a few French crones of fabulous age, who confine their remarks to muttering "Mon Dieu" continuously, and who, I suspect, would gladly poison the whole regiment if they could do so without risk to themselves. But nevertheless we had our camp fire last night, and that too under quite imposing circumstances. The spot selected was a pretty meadow by the side of a stream, about two hundred yards from the village. An officer of taste, and with a capital eye for landscape gardening, devoted himself from a very early hour in the morning to perfecting the arrangements. With a fatigue party, he threw a pretty rustic bridge across the stream, and lined the path leading to it with green boughs. With these two he en-

closed a large circle, with a smaller area close by for the band, and in the centre of the larger circle a great bonfire was built, its foundation raised by the earth excavated from a trench dug around it. All the chairs in the village were collected, and most of the tables, and placed in picturesque confusion around this central point. The officers began to gather about five o'clock. They were all so smart that I felt ashamed of my old tweed shooting jacket and shockingly dilapidated wide-awake. The parade coats had been dug out of the bottom of portmanteaus, and looked quite spruce and natty. Boots had been polished to a pitch that might have stimulated the admiration of Day and Martin. Spurs and buttons glittered brightly in the setting sun. Then our worthy colonel—Oberst von Sictzen-Hennig—made his appearance, accompanied by his stanch ally the major. The colonel too was evidently on ceremony, for he wore the sword which King William presented to him with his own hands the evening of one of the battles of the 1866 campaign. All rose to greet the commanding officer, and immediately that he was seated, the band struck up. So thoroughly was the affair managed, that an elaborately written programme of the music was laid on the colonel's table, of which I took a copy. It may interest English readers to know what music a Prussian regimental band played, while the bass accompaniment was furnished by the roar of the guns over against us on the other side of the Moselle. Here is a copy of the programme:—

Fest Overture	*Fischer.*
An der schönen blauen Donau Walzer	*Strauss.*
La Belle Amazone	*Loischhorn.*
March Potpourri	*Bach.*
Künsther Fest Quadrille . . .	*Hermann.*
Fanfare Militaire	*Ascher.*

It was a very pretty sight. About forty officers were present, grouped picturesquely around the tables. Military servants circulated everywhere, serving the company with glasses of beer. The outside of the bough-enclosed circle was lined with the men of the various battalions, who crowded to the spot, under the attraction of the music. More hearty good fellowship could not be imagined. The colonel and the youngster who won his silver shoulder-straps but yesterday were on the most equal footing. In an interval of the music a young officer came into the circle who had just returned from the hospital at Dusseldorf, whither a bullet through the foot in the battle of the 31st August had sent him. Then he had been only a *feldwebel*, but he had got his lieutenancy when lying on his back, and this was his first appearance among his comrades since his promotion. As he came forward the colonel rose and called for a bumper to the health of his gallant young friend. The young fellow bowed and blushed as all obeyed the chief's order, following the draught with a cheer that must have been heard at St. Julien. Then the colonel was good enough to disarrange the programme for the introduction of "Rule Britannia," as a special token of consideration for your correspondent. By this time the darkness had begun to fall, and the bonfire was formally set fire to, the circle breaking up from the tables, and reforming around its cheerful blaze. The band exhausted the programme, and took to playing song tunes, the officers chiming in lustily with their voices, and the men on the outskirts taking up the chorus. The scene was one in which a painter would have delighted—the bright wood fire lighting up the faces of the circle around it, and ever and anon, as it shot up more brightly, dissipating the thick darkness beyond, and flashing on the faces of the men through the boughs. But no painter could give

effect to what was to me the most weird phase of the affair—the measured thud of the cannonading sounding between every pause in the music or lull in the din of the conversation; and it was strange, too, to reflect that, as we sat here cheerily, we were still within the range of the great guns of St. Julien. I could not help thinking of the effect which a 42-pound shell would have had if it had fallen and exploded right in the heart of the bonfire. The good fellows of the Fourth, however, troubled themselves with no such speculations. It was sufficient for them that St. Julien was quiet, and that the fire was cheery, the company good, and the beer reasonable, plentiful, and palatable. In the course of the evening one of the captains gave a toast, which was received with intense enthusiasm—the health of the gallant comrades who had won the decoration of the Iron Cross. It was on the breast of at least half those who sat round the fire. When the cheering had subsided the band struck up the "Paris" march—a *souvenir* of 1813, in remembrance of which campaign the Iron Cross was first instituted. About half-past eight the colonel gave the toast of "Our Comrades of the Artillery," in honour of some gentlemen of that service who were present, and then, after the band had played "God Save the King," said good night, and went away to his supper. I followed him in a very short time, but when I came outside to smoke my cigar in the moonlight, before turning in straw, I could still hear the merry chorus down in the among the meadow by the camp-fire. It was then about eleven o'clock, and how long after the last of the roisterers may have kept it up I have not the slightest idea.

Retonfay, Oct. 9.—The storm around Metz has subsided, and we are once more in what is here reckoned perfect quietude; although one unaccustomed to the playful ways

of Forts St. Julien and Les Bottes might not unnaturally feel surprise and uneasiness as he watched the flashes from their grim sides at the rate of about one in every five minutes. I have noticed that this fire was always strongest after the hour at which dinner is usually partaken of, and I venture alternate hypotheses to account for the circumstance. It may be that the French gunners, after their scanty meal of horseflesh without salt, get savage, and work off their wrath by discharging their big guns in a wild and promiscuous fashion, just as a Highland laird, when he loses his temper, swears miscellaneously at the whole countryside. Or it may be that, in the absence of solid food, the champagne, which the commandants of the forts presumably consume for dinner, gets into their heads, and prompts them to give orders for the immediate annihilation of the besieging army by a few brisk salvoes from their heavy artillery. Wine, I have reason to believe, is still plentiful in Metz, and wine will reconcile French troops to many hardships.

I telegraphed yesterday morning concerning what seemed then a very threatening aspect of affairs, but the cloud, in a figurative sense, died away, while in a material sense it accumulated and then burst. About midday a furious storm of rain fell, and apparently drowned out the courage of the French. Previous to that hour St Julien and Les Bottes had thrown in all about 100 grenades in among the ruins of the Brasserie and among the fragments of the village of Noisseville. But, as it happened, the Prussian brigade stood just behind both places, and the men had, therefore, an eligible opportunity of acquainting themselves in perfect safety with the potency of a shell-fire from heavy artillery. The fire gradually died away to the south, and about two o'clock the order came for the reserves and artillery to return to their several quarters, and for the outposts to be reinstated in their original positions. Since then there has been no new alarm. It

is not difficult, I think, to form a tolerably correct opinion as to the plan of Bazaine's tactics of yesterday. At the lowest estimate he must have 65,000 troops, which, so far as the defence of Metz is concerned, are superfluous, and, therefore, detrimental. This element is the lever which the Prussians are using for the reduction of the fortress. They are ploughing their enemy's ground with their enemy's heifer. A hundred thousand men will sooner consume a given quantity of provisions than will twenty thousand; and when the larger number reach starvation point, the surrender of everything—field troops, garrison, fortress, and town—must occur. But for their appreciation of this eventuality, nothing would please the Prussians better than to open a fair passage to Bazaine any hour in the twenty-four. He might come outside the cordon and welcome with 60,000 men, and in the course of the following day, when he was holding a council of war, and debating, *more Gallico*, whether to march on Sedan or strike southward and cut the Prussian communications, a hundred thousand Prussians would fall upon him from all points of the compass and smite him hip and thigh. But if his army were chopped into fragments to-morrow, the fortress of Metz, with its garrison left inside, would still confront the besiegers, and its reduction would be postponed in proportion to the procrastination of the starvation point effected by the fewer mouths to feed. Of all this Bazaine, a capable man, whose energy and merits the Prussians acknowledge frankly, cannot fail to be aware. He objects to capitulation *simpliciter* in the fortress, or to the alternative of capitulation or annihilation in the open field. But there lies the Moselle, beckoning him on to the half-way house of Thionville, and beyond Thionville, at the distance of a single forced march, lies the frontier. Oh! if he could only dash out through that vexatious cordon. Across the beautiful plain lie the divisions of the Landwehr. A

regular soldier himself, Bazaine has probably learned to despise the Garde Mobile with all the contempt of a veteran used to command veteran troops; and nothing is more natural than for a Frenchman to reason from a false analogy that as the Garde Mobile so are the Landwehr. To-day he has to digest his misconception as best he may. But the conception of Bazaine's effort was creditable to his knowledge of the military art. While he made his grand effort against the Landwehr in the valley, he did his best to keep the other sections of the environing circle from finding leisure to concentrate in support of the Landwehr. The attack on Vany, L'Orme, and Chieulles was well calculated to engross the 10th Army Corps; that from Mey on Noisseville and Servigny might well perform the same office with regard to the 1st Army Corps; the 7th Army Corps might be supposed to have their hands pretty well full with the sortie against Peltre, Mercy-le-haut, and Ars-Laquenexy, and with luck this sortie, too, might get through as far as the depôt at Courcelles, and bring back of its abundance to the Gardes Nationales who were plying the big guns on the ramparts, and to the hungry citizens. The well-conceived feint against Ladonchamps was intended to keep the 3rd Army Corps in play, occupying as it does the slopes between the valley and the fort of Plappeville. And then—there was but the Landwehr to cope with, and surely 40,000 veteran French troops might crash through the lines of these citizen soldiers, weakened as those lines were by elongation across the whole plateau. Then, hey for Thionville! only ten miles off, where a secure lair might be had under the guns of that fortress while the columns caught their wind; and then, picking up by the way what superfluous troops there might be in its garrison, one long march to the frontier, and it gained a surrender to the Dutch troops instead of the

detested Prussians. This I state to have been Bazaine's programme. Had it succeeded, Metz would have been a tougher nut for the Prussians to crack than ever; their policy of starvation would have been seriously compromised, and Bazaine's field army would only have anticipated the inevitable capitulation.

The two grand blunders which defeated the scheme were the misconception on Bazaine's part of the strength, prowess, and effective dispositions of the Landwehr, and the mistaken idea that his feints to the right and left would so engross the 10th and 3rd Army Corps as to prevent them from aiding the Landwehr to give him check on the plateau. His error on the former point must have come home to him when he saw his regulars recoiling pell-mell from the bayonet points of the Landwehr men in the villages; the salvoes of artillery sent by the 10th Army Corps from Malroy, Olgy, and other heights on the east side of the Moselle, and by the 3rd Army Corps from Frenecourt, Sennecourt, and the heights above St. Rémy, all coigns of vantage on the bluffs on the western fringe of the valley, must have made him comprehend that a feigned attack, even if considerable, was not capable of engrossing the full attention of a Prussian Army Corps. The batteries on the positions I have named enfiladed him ruinously. Down the valley there tore a fierce direct fire from the batteries at Amelange and those in front of Brieux, which advanced by alternate batteries with as much coolness and precision as I have seen the troops of a cavalry regiment working in the Phœnix Park; while from the heights on either side came such a cross fire that I am filled with respect for the troops of Bazaine, when I realize the fact that they waited for the bayonet to dislodge them from their position. Add to Bazaine's disadvantages, that he was miserably short of field

artillery, and the conclusion is obvious, that he could not but have failed under the circumstances, while the deduction is no less patent than the frustration of any future attempt is equally inevitable. Bazaine may betake himself to a careful estimate of his food stores, and then work a little sum in the rule of simple division. Let him divide the number of rations by the number of mouths he has to feed—the result will be the number of days for which he can hold out. Let him add, if he please, two days for the consumption of the available boot leather, and other two for the Quixotry of absolute starvation, if he can prevail on his men to suffer it *causâ honoris;* and he can count the hours that will intervene between the hoisting of the white flag with as much certainty as the inmate of the condemned cell can reckon the hour that Mr. Calcraft shall present himself.

The Prussians will intervene in no way to disturb a calculation made on the basis of rations and mouths. Their tactics are fixed. Their circle of environment is drawn, and will neither be widened nor curtailed. But it is highly probable that even if Bazaine should abandon as hopeless any intention of cutting through, there may be some severe fighting within the next few days. I have often had occasion to refer to the belt of "neutral" villages which lies between the Prussian and the French foreposts—a kind of "no-man's land," as to the non-disturbance of which a sort of tacit understanding has existed from the first. The Prussians have loyally maintained this understanding, out of regard to the women and children occupying the villages; the French have frequently violated it. Bazaine's dispositions of the day before yesterday were based on an all-round violation of the understanding, and the one-sided character of an arrangement adhered to only by one of the parties con-

cerned must be obvious. I have reason to believe that it is under consideration on the part of the Prussian authorities, whether it be not imperative, in the interest of the cause in which they are engaged, and for the prevention of outbursts causing loss of life, to make a total destruction of these neutral villages, and clear the intervening space right up to the French front. This is in accordance with the recommendation of distinguished engineer officers. One of these, a man whose opinion is of immense weight, assured me, on the 7th inst., that he was prepared to recommend this course from the very outset, and that its postponement was merely mistaken lenity. "War is war," was his grim remark. From a military point of view I agree *in toto* with this distinguished tactician. I cannot but honour the generous counsels which have as yet averted the step, and which, as I think probable, would still have prevailed but for the bad faith of the French army. As I came through an abandoned village yesterday, I read an inscription which some sententious individual had written with the end of a charred stick on the front of a burnt house, "C'est la guerre!" was the dry comment on the ruin. I should have liked to have seen this blackened cottage, with its short but bitter inscription, set down on one of the Boulevards of Paris when the capital was ringing with the shouts of "A Berlin! A Berlin!" And "C'est la guerre" will be all the consolation left to the desolate ones. But, good folks in Britain, with big hearts and heavy purses,—and I may add with snug houses and firm roof-trees,—I pray you think of these poor creatures, now housing in the doomed villages; when the warning goes forth, what will be their fate in this inclement weather, with the ground a quagmire and the country desolated for miles around! Think, wives and mothers, of the women and of the little ones that "la guerre" forces to

quit the humble cottage homes and go forth—God alone knows whither. If anything is done for these wretched peasantry let it be done quickly, while yet it is possible to do good. At present the inhabitants of the villages occupied by the Prussians live on the frank, but necessarily casual, charity of the Prussian soldiery. In this village the venerable pastor lies stricken with an incurable disease. In his house are quartered several Prussian officers, and with one of these I paid a visit to the sick room on the night of our arrival. The dying old man—a gentleman and a scholar—showed us, with a blush on his withered face, his empty purse. Food, physic, money, or medical comforts, he had none. They have quick sympathies, these gallant lads of the Prussian army! Out came the purse, and the thalers clinked as the pastor's empty purse grew heavier. Then there was a bolt for the regimental doctor, and in half an hour a bottle of physic was by the bed-head, and a cup of Liebig in the pastor's hand. The old man wept as he blessed the lad, and methought there was water in the eyes of the latter as he bent his head, Protestant as he is, to receive the blessings of a Catholic. This is but one instance out of the many of the generous sympathy of the Prussians; but this, warm as it is, must utterly fail to overtake the necessities of the case, if the destruction of these villages should be decided on. The true help would consist in the transportation of the women and children to a part of France not afflicted with active warfare, and their maintenance till, after the proclamation of peace, their homes should be rebuilt. The undertaking is not a stupendous one—in all, probably, there are not 400 unfortunates. There will be many less after a time, if assistance of some kind cannot be afforded.

If, however, friends in Britain should be moved to make some effort to ameliorate the condition of these wretched

victims of war, it is necessary to warn whatever scheme of administration may be adopted against dilettanteism, red tape, and the truly British practice of divided responsibility. Let warning be taken by the imbecile failure of the organization of the British ambulances for affording aid to the wounded. I have not words to express my disgust and contempt for the mal-administration which makes the whole affair a laughing-stock in this section of the theatre of war. We all know how long the war has lasted. I should have expected to see some kind of organization at the instance of the British society established around Metz, looking at the funds which a generous public has placed at the disposal of the directorate. In contradistinction to this, I am officially informed that the management in Saarbruck are engaged in the construction of a depôt for the reception of their stores, since no existing building can be obtained on lease. There are empty French mills at Steering—three miles from Saarbruck, and advantageously situated on the railway—which might be had for the trouble of occupation. But then Steering is some distance from the fleshpots of Egypt in the shape of good tables d'hôte and spring mattresses. I take it that the edifice at Saarbruck will be roofed in and floored about the time when the war is over, and the wounded are all hobbling about in a convalescent state. I am also officially informed that an ambulance train of eight carriages has yesterday been sent forward to Remilly, and that the "English Ambulance" is now prepared to fulfil requisitions made upon it from any quarter. The Remilly expedition is to wait there "for the capitulation of Metz;" and it may be of some use, provided the Staff have not consumed in the meantime all the medical comforts in aiding the sick in the hospitals of the town and fortress. But I submit that it is not sufficient for a concern like the English

Ambulance to take its ease in its inn, and to intimate in a slipshod way, by casual journeys to the front, that it is in a condition to supply requisitions. This much a wholesale druggist would do, and be glad to do. Neither does it accord with what I consider the duty of a national matter like this, that its conductors in this quarter should quietly remain on the frontier, and helplessly request suggestions from men who may be on the foreposts with eyes in their heads. The route all round Metz is open for anybody who is well authenticated and well mounted, and it is the part of a judicious administrator to judge for himself, rather than to entreat suggestions from others. I think it would be neither difficult nor a matter occupying much time to organize a thoroughly efficient ambulance for the district around Metz. The two typical men in my mind for such are, a Pickford's depôt foreman and the late Mr. Bianconi, who organized the mail-car system throughout Ireland. The foreman could do all, and more than all, that the ambulance is now doing. With the facilities which the Prussian authorities cheerfully accord, he would intimate his wilingness "to fulfil all requisitions that might be made upon him." He would deposit the required materials at the doors of the several lazarettos in want of them. Then, as regards the real purpose for which an "ambulance" is intended, and whence it derives its name. Around Metz, in the third line, there are everywhere practicable roads. District depôts might easily be established, one say at Ste. Barbe, another at Olgy, a third somewhere behind Sennecourt, and a fourth at Gravelotte. To these depôts might be consigned the sick and wounded Prussians from the several regiments and brigades—the poor fellows who now make long weary journeys to Courcelles in springless country carts or on foot. Between each of these depôts there might be a continuous service of elongated Irish

jaunting cars. Such vehicles are the true pattern of an ambulance. They would hold a man on either foot-rest, two more on the seats, and one above the well in the centre. Four poles at each corner, with tarpauling, would make an efficient protection from the weather. Thus, by easy stages, and resting at intervals in the depôts, might the sick and wounded be brought down in ease and comfort to Courcelles, whence the trains are ready to convey them to Prussia. These hospital trains are the most complete things of the kind I have ever seen. The carriages are built on the American model, with entrance at either end. There are two tiers of beds down each side, three in each tier, and the beds have every appliance calculated to give comfort to the occupants. One carriage is devoted to the purposes of a laboratory, another forms a living and sleeping room for the volunteer attendants, and a third is a kitchen. I have written about the English Ambulance from a vivid remembrance of Balaclava. That fort, with its organization for provisioning and medical purposes, got into a decent state of method and system about ten days before the order came for the embarkation of the troops which had reduced Sevastopol. I think it probable that the same tardy results will characterize our organization in the present instance, unless some one with energy, knowledge of what is really wanted, or contempt for the Circumlocution Office, and no special craving for the fleshpots of Egypt, has entrusted to him the control of affairs. At Courcelles there is a German depôt under Baron Kramm, which is really working tooth and nail under difficulties that an English ambulance would not have to encounter. The Baron himself is one of the most energetic men I have met, and works day and night with the supremest contempt for the good things of this life.

The terribly wet weather which we have had for the last thirty-six hours has already begun to tell a tale on the health of the Prussian troops. Waggon-load after waggon-load of sick men goes down to Courcelles. Diarrhœa and bronchitis are the chief complaints. There are many more men arriving well than departing sick, and good things for the troops pour in apace. We had yesterday a large consignment of red wine, seltzer-water, underclothing, and cigars, and it pleased me not a little to see the hospital orderlies administering to the wounded men in Amelange soda-water, on the bottles containing which was the name of an English firm. The knitted woollen abdominal belts which have been sent down from the Fatherland are most valuable things for the prevention of ill-health in this weather, when the rain is coming down in a deluge, and the whole country is like thin putty. A heavy pelt of hail fell yesterday.

The Oberst has just called upon us, bringing me a letter, and also the semi-official information that three French eagles and two French battalions were captured at the battle of Maizières the day before yesterday. I have just seen a statement in a German paper, quoted from Brussels, to the effect that an open letter has been found in a "post balloon" from Metz, stating that Lebœuf and Bazaine have wounded each other in a duel, and that Canrobert is now in command. I do not impugn the veracity of the statement that such information may have been contained in an open letter found in a balloon—it may be true, or a Belgian invention; I have no means of judging. But I can inform you of this fact—which I have learnt personally from French prisoners of the day before yesterday—that Bazaine himself conducted the operations of that day, and that he was in the immediate front of St. Eloy when the combined attacks were made on Ladonchamps and Grandes and Petites Tapes.

October 11.—A French deserter from the army of Metz was brought here this morning, as I have already informed you by telegram. He belonged to the 59th of the Line, and to the Army Corps of which Marshal Lebœuf has the command. His regiment, along with two others, is lying on the slope on which stands the village of Vauloux, a little behind Mey. He told us that his desertion was a matter of arrangement with a large body of the soldiery. Lots had been drawn who should make the first attempt, and if the experiment succeeded, the others were to desert likewise. He dodged along the verge of the Bois de Grimont, and then came sneaking through the vine-bergs till he reached the Prussian *feldwacht* behind Nouilly. I am told that many Frenchmen were observed watching his career. The man is an Alsatian, as are most of the men of his regiment, and he speaks German well. He says the men around Metz are tired of their lives. Nominally, the force to which he belonged lives under canvas, but the stench in the tents is so strong, by reason of cutaneous diseases among the men, that almost all sleep in the open air. This for the last two days has been tantamount to sleeping in a water-butt. The skin disease is chiefly of a scorbutic character, caused by the want of vegetables, the absence of salt, and the almost exclusive living on horseflesh. The poor fellow's mouth and face were in a very bad state from scurvy. He says most of his fellows are similarly affected. The spirit of disaffection is almost universal; even the Guards are tainted with it. Since the defeat of the 7th they positively refuse to make any more sorties, and it is with difficulty that the officers can prevail on the men to go upon outpost duty. The service is very severe. Bazaine is a strict disciplinarian, and insists on his troops lying continually in immediate readiness for action. Of bread the deserter says there is considerable scarcity, and the

quality is bad; the quantity of rice served out is a teacupful per day between two men. This with the bread is all the food besides horseflesh the men have. They have eaten the horses of several cavalry regiments, and are now masticating battery horses. Bazaine has caused great grumbling in the town of Metz by impressing into the service either as soldiers or sick carriers all the able-bodied citizens, no matter of what age; and by this expedient, notwithstanding the many sick, he contrives to keep the number of troops under arms up to the nominal number of 100,000.

Retonfay, Oct. 13.—A beat-up of the enemy's quarters about Borny and Grigny took place yesterday. By twelve o'clock the troops here, previously on the alert, were called forward into the rear of the first line. Everything went with them—luggage, horses, *marketenders*. Even the two battalion dogs, objecting to be out of the *mêlée*, went to the front like their masters. Unfortunately, owing to a slight and temporary lameness, I was unable to follow; and there I was left alone on a truss of straw in the corner of a dilapidated room, when, for aught I could tell, something really worth seeing was going on within a short mile of where I lay. Inaction is bad enough when you see others moving about around you, setting forth for cheery calls on comrades, starting for adventurous rides along the foreposts, or returning with narratives of what they had seen, and which to see also you would have given anything in reason. But solitary inaction is ever so much worse, especially when you can hear the crash of the artillery and the shriller music of the small arms within an aggravatingly short distance. We have all read of instances where the invitations such sounds afforded have summoned men even from their death-beds to partake in the stirring doings. Of one notable example I myself am cognizant. The night before the battle of Balaclava

one of the butchers of a light cavalry regiment got desperately drunk, and was handed over to the custody of the guard. In the morning began the memorable battle. "Butcher Jack," awakened from his drunken slumber by the din of the cannon, longed with the true spirit of a soldier to be among his fellows. The guard had strolled away to the crest of the knoll to look down upon the battle, and Jack, sallying out and making a *détour*, succeeding in catching and mounting a stray Russian charger just in time for the Light Cavalry charge into the Valley of Death. Into that valley the man rode without a coat, his shirt sleeves rolled up, and his hands and arms stained with the relics of the yesterday's butchering work. What is more, he came out safe, with a wounded comrade across the pommel of his saddle; and till "Butcher Jack" drank himself to death in the purlieus of Cork, he wore on his breast the medal for "distinguished conduct in the field." But this—in the words of somebody whose name I do not at the moment remember—this is a digression. The doctor's orders were peremptory that I should remain on the straw, and there I lay and chafed. Imagine the feelings of a lover who lies with a broken leg in the parlour, listening to a rival kissing his sweetheart in the passage. Imagine the feelings of a young lady kept at home from a ball by the non-arrival of a dress, when her sisters have gone away in the fly, and when she listens to the waltz-music and the footfall of the dancers in the semi-detached villa over the way. If you can imagine the concentrated quintessence of all these bitter feelings, you may be able to realize something of my torture as I lay on the straw. At last I could bear it no longer. I called Bach. Bach is a curiosity. Bach is my servant. I picked him up here. He was a kind of nondescript civil servant, having a precarious connection with the officers of the 6th com-

pany of the 4th Regiment. I originally noticed him because I happened to observe him cleaning a pair of boots on the *replie* in front of Noisseville, and whistling melodiously while the Chassepôt bullets were singing about his head. When the order came out that civil servants belonging to the officers before Metz should be sent home, I annexed Bach, and have found him a remarkably useful fellow. It is true he is not much to look at. Like Mr. Bright's terrier dog, it would puzzle a stranger to find out which is head or tail in Bach. He wears a pair of Prussian military trousers. On his trunk is a shooting jacket I have given him covered with a sheepskin coat with the wool outwards, like the garment worn by the drosky drivers of St. Petersburg. The edifice is crowned by the cap of a French line-officer looted in the fight before Noisseville on the 1st September. Bach's genealogy would puzzle Mr. Darwin or any other elucidator of the origin of species. I am lost in doubt whether he is a Russ, a Pole, a Dantziger, or a Dane. He seems to speak with indifference all the languages of the north of Europe, and is rapidly learning English under my tuition. Of Bach I demanded to know whether there was a wheelbarrow in the place. Bach would go and see. He returned in about ten minutes with the tidings that he had found a wheelbarrow, but that it had no wheel. "But," continued Bach, "I am strong, mein Herr; mount you on my back, and I will carry you to the front." The proposition was tempting, and Bach was unquestionably strong. I got off the straw and on to his back, and off we set. How the honest soldiers laughed as we passed them, as they lined the *chaussée* on the road to the Brasserie. They asked me whether I was an Uhlan, where were my spurs, and a dozen other chaffing questions. When at length we reached the Brasserie, the Hauptmann in command there, with a grim smile,

stated that the post was too exposed for "cavalry" to find cover there, and that I must "ride" more to the left, into the "Tambour," a considerable earthwork fortification on the slope of the valley between the Brasserie and Montoy. Into the Tambour accordingly Bach carried me, and laid me down in the rear of a bank of earth thrown up in front of a temporary barrack.

After all, the affair came to but very little. Two batteries of 12-pounders took up position before the front line, about half-way between Colombey and Montoy, and threw shells into the French camp around Grigny and Borny. The infantry were in readiness to attack, and the fore-posts were actually posted forward some distance, and were the authors of the sharp fire which I had heard, but the French gave way and dodged under cover out of reach of the shells. But that everything was thoroughly wetted by the heavy rain, Borny would probably have been fired by the Prussian shells; as it was, no tangible result was obtained by the little operation. A few men were wounded on our side on the foreposts. A couple of hours after, the infantry fire at Montoy had wholly ceased, and when the artillery were firing sleepily and at long intervals, the French woke up directly opposite us—seemingly in retaliation. St. Julien broke into a profuse shell-fire directed against Servigny, the Brasserie, and the Tambour in which I lay. Six shells burst in the already shattered Brasserie, and two in the wreck of the house on the other side of the road, while several dropped in the immediate vicinity. Two or three likewise tumbled into the Tambour, but did no harm, although it was rather trying to one's nerves to listen to shells bursting, so to speak, in one's ear. About two o'clock half a French battalion staggered forward out of Mey, and on to the slope of the vine-berg below Noisseville. It was inexplicable what could have been the object of the

demonstration, so hopeless both from its weakness and its want of spirit. I did not see the advance myself, but eye-witnesses inform me that it was headed by an exceptional number of officers, who continually encouraged forward their unwilling men. Some of the officers actually carried Chassepôts. The Prussian foreposts did not think it worth while to fall back on their supports. They waited patiently till the French had come within about 300 yards and fired a wild and straggling volley. Then from their entrenchments they poured in a withering fire, and the French melted away like water. The Prussian loss is two men killed and three wounded in this affair. I have no means of ascertaining the French.

The following letter, dated October 19, is from Corny, the head-quarters of Prince Frederick Charles, the "Red Prince":—

Reaching Remilly at an early hour yesterday morning, I found five fourgons belonging to the English Ambulance Company about to start for this place, and I had the opportunity afforded me of a seat in one of the carriages. Our journey hither lay behind the foreposts, through a chain of villages in the rear of the great bulk of the Prussian regiments in the south of Metz. As we passed Pontoy we emerged on the upland plateau lying to the south of Forts Queleu and St. Privat, and before us, to the north, lay these sulky-looking fortresses, which refused to be enlightened even by the rays of the afternoon sun which fell full on their sullen sides. St. Privat was speaking with its great guns, firing in the direction of the Moselle, but close to us lay a Prussian field-battery in utter quiescence—sure token that nothing of importance was going on. At dusk we reached Corny, and applied to the Etappen Commandant for quarters.

His answer was an imperative suggestion of the same character as that which the Gardes Mobile made to Mr. Malet, on the way from Paris to Meaux with the communication to Count Bismarck which resulted in the abortive visit of Jules Favre. We had no resource but to sleep under the beautiful stars. They were, fortunately, in our case visible, and we bivouacked not uncomfortably in an orchard outside the town, which was greatly preferable to finding harbour in any of the houses of Corny, infected as they are to the very ceiling with malignant typhus. A visit for purposes of information to the fine old château occupied by Prince Frederick Charles, resulted in my being told that the parliamentaire which came out the other day had returned into Metz without any definite result, and that it was believed that Metz would now hold out to the bitter end. Further, that there was to be no change in the Prussian tactics. Still "masterly inactivity" was to be the policy, and the intelligence received from Metz, of a reliable character, was of a nature to indicate that this policy could not possibly, ere long, fail to effect the desired results.

Prince Frederick Charles, who has been suffering seriously from dysentery, is still far from fully recovered, but he is able to sit his horse, and he has never devolved his functions of commander-in-chief on any substitute. The Prince is not particularly desirous of the presence of any correspondents. To one possessed, as I am, of the royal permission, no positive discourtesy is manifested; on the contrary, a civil attention of, however, a very distant character, is displayed; but no secret is made of the fact that my absence would be more agreeable than my presence. It is not the first time that I have experienced this anti-correspondent idiosyncrasy of Prince Frederick Charles. On the night before the battle of

Vionville, I was lodged by his orders in the agreeable society of some two dozen highly odoriferous French prisoners. At that time I was not in possession of the head-quarters pass; but I recognized last night my quondam friend, the major of the gendarmes, who turned the key on me in the middle of August. He gave me last night a very blunt hint that he would not be sorry if the duty fell to his province of escorting me out of Corny into the vague regions of space, and I have no doubt he would have acted upon his feeling, had it not been for the moral influence of General Podbrelski's signature.

We start this morning for Gravelotte, taking the route by Gorze, and shall work by the northward athwart the valley of the Moselle, in the line of Marange and Maizières, and so back to my old advantageous quarters under Fort St. Julien. At Gravelotte, I understand, as I think I have mentioned previously, that there are a couple of batteries of 24-pounders; but these cannot be used for serious offensive purposes. They are only useful as holding the key to the grand *chaussée* which leads from Metz to Verdun, the road for the possession of which the battle of Vionville was fought.

Hitherto during this campaign the sight of Prussian cavalry has always been hailed by me with delight. With few exceptions all the Prussian officers are gentlemen, but there is a genial heartiness about the cavalry officers which is very pleasant, and which seems peculiar to themselves. I have never till yesterday found any exception to this rule, and it is in some degree a personal disappointment and humiliation to one who has himself worn a cavalry sword to have to mention a flagrant exception. Yesterday the ambulance with which I was travelling halted just outside the village of Pommerieux at a way-side cottage, with a view to dinner.

We wanted nothing but a table inside a room. The soldiers and *feldwebels* (of the 5th Uhlan Regiment) who were quartered in the house warmly responded in the affirmative to our question whether we might enter and take out our provender, and we were engaged in dining when we suddenly became aware of the advent of an officer. Without deigning the most chary courtesy, he summarily ordered us out of the place. In vain it was represented to him that we would go as soon as our meal was finished; with a clash of his sword on the ground he vociferated that we must turn out at once. The soldiers and the *feldwebels* stood looking on with countenances that seemed to apologize for the discourtesy of their superior, but he was relentless Of course, finding so marked an absence of gentlemanly instinct, we ceased to press the matter, and packed up and turned out with all speed, the officer standing lowering at us meanwhile till we had finally shaken the dust off our feet, or rather the mud, of the place which his discourtesy rendered so inhospitable. To a correspondent like myself such discourtesy, although rare, would have been accepted, so to speak, as part of the day's work, and would not have demanded notice from my pen; but to gentlemen engaged in bringing medical stores and comforts for the sick and wounded of the Prussian army it was so unique, and so positively barbarous, as to excite surprise and sorrow.

Corny lies in a trough on the edge of the Moselle, shut out from even a distant view of Metz by two curious conical hills, which are part of the series of which the hill of Mousson and the range of St. Quentin and Plappeville are also summits. The peak nearest the river and also nearest Metz is known as the Mont St. Blaise. Its elevation is considerable, and its position renders it highly eligible as a look-out station. It would not be Prussian-like

if this coign of vantage had not been taken advantage of. On its summit there is an observatory, and this observatory I visited this morning, notwithstanding the black looks of those in authority in Corny. As I rode up the mount I found it to consist of a curious crumbling mica, which had crumbled in places into small loose stones. The whole summit is honeycombed with artificial caves, formed, I suppose, in the old days, when the ruin on the summit was a castle inhabited by some magnate of Lorraine, who from his eyrie here dominated the beautiful plain before him and the valley of the Moselle. Alongside of this ruin, and at an equal elevation, stands a lonely farm-house, and in front of it the Prussians have erected a wooden look-out post, open toward Metz, and mounted with a very powerful telescope. Not a man can move within the scope of vision that the action is not noted by the officer who constantly sits with his eye at this instrument. A series of telegraph wires from the several head-quarters of the different army corps converge into a little office in the rear of this look-out post, and the intentions of the French are thus known as soon as they proceed to manifest them by action. The post is occupied by two officers belonging to the Second Army Corps—one an officer of infantry, another of engineers; and they have at their disposal a detachment of soldiers to act as orderlies, messengers, &c. What a glorious view opens out before one as he stands on the little plateau in front of the ruin of the Castle of St. Blaise, and looks Metz-ward! Shade of Achilles! what a plain for a battle according to the old ding-dong style, when our fore-fathers went at it in fair fight, disdaining advantages of position, and eager only that the best man should win! On the left lies the narrow valley of the Moselle, with the slope of the vine-bergs in front of Gorze rising beyond. At our feet, to the left, lies Ars-sur-Moselch,

skirted by the railway, with the old Roman aqueduct spanning the Moselle with its antique arches, and the new road-bridge nearer Montigny, where is the junction of the railway lines from Nancy and from Saarbruck. A locomotive was dodging about the junction as I looked down upon it, and right before me stretched the rich and beautiful plain, variegated with green and brown and yellow, according to the tint of the crops and the foliage, and with the great twin-tower of the Cathedral of Metz standing up defiantly in its centre. The river wound through the flat in three great stretches: one close under the frowning bulk of Mont St. Quentin, that sulked blackly across at us on the left front; the other twisting in a long half loop far away to the right. As it seemed immediately under us, Fort St. Privat peeped spitefully out over the poplars surrounding the pretty village and château of Cuvry, and further to my right the grim earth-work front of Fort Queleu showed itself over the plain like a huge beaver-dam. The prospect was vast. Carrying the eye over the spires of the cathedral, I could see to the north of Metz the long link of the Moselle trending eastward toward Olgy and Malroy, and with the powerful telescope in position I could even discern Fort St. Eloy, and beyond it the blackened ruins of St. Remy, Ladonchamps, and Grands and Petites Tapes, where on the 7th I had seen the Landwehr die in their tracks rather than yield the post they held, although bidden thereto by an overwhelming number of enemies. And now I will simply transcribe the notes I made of the several positions of the French and Prussians on the south and west of Metz, as I made out by my own observations through the great telescope, supplemented by the information so courteously and frankly afforded by the engineer officer who was on duty at the look-out.

To begin at the now well-known Mercy-le-Haut. Opposite

this point the French are in force in front of Grigry, from which position they last night burnt the remaining houses of Peltre. Working westward, the French foreposts are in Bevoye, Magny, in front of Montigny, and thence across the Moselle, at Moulins les Metz, which was burnt about a fortnight ago. From Moulins the forepost line runs up toward St. Hubert, between St. Ruffine and Chazelles, hence in front of Scy through the valley close under Mont St. Quentin to Sessy, and thence northward, with a light sweep allowed by Plappeville, to Devant les Pontse, and thence to Vigneulles and Woippy. With the completion of the circle, the readers of the *Daily News* who have perused my previous letters must be well acquainted. Fair play demands that, having detailed the French forepost line, I should be equally precise (as I am fortunately able to be) with regard to the Prussian foreposts, which confront them. Beginning then in the same latitude and longitude as I did as regards the former, the Prussian foreposts stand at Peltre, and thence westward in front of St. Thiebauldt, and in La Paperterie (opposite Magny). Then there is a sweep comparatively close to Metz, as the Moselle is neared, and the Prussian foreposts stand impudently at Freseaty, whence the sentries must be able almost to discern the complexions of the gunners in St. Privat. The line crosses the Moselle to Vaux, considerably in front of Ars-sur-Moselle, and then makes a dart forward to Jussy, right under the guns of St. Quentin. Tongeau, where there is a battery of twelve-pounders, which blazes into Scy and Chazelles, right under the nose of St. Quentin, continues the chain to Chatel St. Germain, a place which I visited on the 19th of August, the day after Gravelotte, when the dead lay in heaps in the little village, and where already General von Göben had thrown up entrenchments to cover his foreposts from the shells of St. Quentin.

Across the plateau and the wood of Chatel run the links of the strong forepost chain, giving a wide berth to the big guns of Plappeville, behind Lorry to Vigneulles, from Vigneulles to Saulny, from Saulny, still further north-east, to Villers le Plesnois, and so by Norroy to the blood-stained Ladonchamps, and the villages whose names are known in connection with the combat of the 7th inst., to the Moselle at Maxe.

So much for the positions of the two hostile armies in this portion of the investiture. A few words now as to the position of the French inside their outposts, yet outside the town of Metz, the gates of which are sealed to Bazaine's army as rigorously as is the road to liberty. The French have in all, in the environed space and outside Metz, four great lagers or camps. The first and probably the largest is on the slope of Mont St. Quentin, looking toward Mont St. Blaise. I could see the rows of tents athwart and athwart the slope, past the village of Scy, and stretching almost down to Chazelles. Another great camp begins at Longeville, a village on the west bank of the Moselle, in a line between St. Quentin and Metz, and this lager straggles up the river margin first to St. Martin, where Bazaine has his head-quarters, and so on to the north as far as Devants les Pontse. A third great camp is in front of St. Julien, toward Vauloux, Vallieres, &c., concerning which I have already been able to give your readers detailed information. The fourth camp is, as I have already described it, around Corny and Grigry. Besides these camps of soldiers there are two great collections of sick, which I could discern with great ease through the telescope of the observatory. One of these is placed on the esplanade in front of the Cathedral at Metz, and along the river brink. I saw the sick being carried about on stretchers, and the curtains of the tents looped up to give air to the

inmates. Another great sick camp is on the Island of Sauley, the whole of which seems devoted to the purpose, and I learn that efforts are made to isolate the place as much as possible. It is one huge block of typhus fever. Here the fell epidemic is housed, or rather tented, and I could see the sentries stationed on the bridges, and bidding stand all and sundry. Lebœuf's headquarters, I should mention, are at Longeville.

Prisoners, brought into Corny yesterday, state that a pretence of regular rations existed in Metz up till yesterday. On that day the rations were out, and there was to be henceforth nothing but horseflesh. It was, however, confidently reported in Metz, that before capitulation Bazaine — who, all statements to the contrary, still retains the supreme command—was to make one last desperate effort to break through into Luxemburg. If that failed, capitulation was inevitable. The whole line is on the *qui vive* for this attack, which, between you and me and the post, I don't think will come off.

Charly, Oct. 22.—After I had ascended the hill above Corny, on which the Prussians have their headquarters observatory, and as to the view from which I wrote with considerable detail the day before yesterday, our party shook off from their feet the dust of Prince Frederick Charles's ungenial headquarters, glad to get away from the suspicious glances and the surly speeches of the *feldgendarmerie* of the staff. Mr. Lee, who had charge of the expedition, decided on sending three of his five fourgons up the river in the direction of Pont-à-Mousson, with instructions to make the wider half circuit thus necessary as quickly as possible, and having left their stores at the various hospitals on the way, to get back to Remilly, and be in readiness for anything that might eventuate. He himself, with the two remaining fourgons, was to push forward through Gorze to Rezonville

and Gravelotte, where we were everywhere told there were many sick and wounded, while there was a great lack of medical comforts and stores. From Gravelotte Mr. Lee determined to go to the hospital at Verneville, thence to Feves, from Feves down into the valley of the Moselle, go through Maizières to the pontoon at Haut-concourt, and spend the third night of his tour in some one of the numerous villages on the east bank. This programme so exactly coincided with my own views that I was very glad to accept the courteous offer which Mr. Lee made me of a seat in his own fourgon; and during yesterday and to-day we have thus travelled in company. After quitting Corny our way lay across the river to Noveant, the means of transit being a pontoon bridge. An officer stood on the bank to regulate the traffic. He put me not a little in mind of one of our respected metropolitan policemen when engaged in a similar duty. He shouted, ran to and fro, stopped one waggon to let another go on, and his efforts culminated about every ten minutes in a dead lock, from his having halted everything in a kind of tangled maze. This amusement had spoiled his temper, and we could do nothing with him when we civilly asked him to expedite our passage. Indeed I rather incline to think that the fact of the request having been made at all told against us with this gentleman, for he kept us stationary more than once, while he called forward vehicles that were in our rear. Hour after hour passed, and we seemed as much fixtures as in the first quarter of an hour. One of our party, prospecting a little distance up-stream, came back with the intelligence that within about half a mile there was another pontoon bridge which was wholly unused, and which seemed quite practicable. Disregarding the round oaths which our friend the policeman-like officer rapped out as we temporarily created a stoppage in extricating

the fourgons from the press of vehicles waiting to cross, we drew out of the line and made all haste for the other bridge, which we crossed in triumph. Just outside we came on a graveyard, which the Prussians had improvised for the bodies of those who have died in the hospitals there, whether from sickness or wounds. They bury the dead now in deal coffins, but the coffins are put in the ground with very scant ceremony. I saw a fatigue party putting a couple into a hole, the coffins lying on the grass while the men dug their receptacle.

Gorze is very much changed for the better since the last time I was in it, two days after the battle of Gravelotte. Then there was blood in the very gutters. On a billiard table in the rear of the principal hotel lay three shattered men, who had bled so profusely that, there being no orifice for the blood to flow away, they actually lay in a pool of their own blood. There was not a square yard in all the hotel unoccupied by wounded; the dead were stacked in a corner of the garden waiting for interment. Now everything was changed. From the summit of the great convent on the hill there still was flying the hospital flag; but under it lay few or no wounded men. The hotel was tenanted by the cheery officers of the staff of Prince Louis of Hesse, who commanded the troops lying in the town, consisting of several regiments of Hessian men, with the lion instead of the eagle on their helmets. Gorze was a place where a considerable amount of irritated feeling was manifested toward the Prussians on the part of the inhabitants in the early days of the occupation. Here, as the story ran, which for the sake of human nature I am glad to know is a lie, a French girl was found hacking off the fingers of a wounded Prussian, and was taken out and hanged *flagrante delicto*. Unquestionably there was much bitterness, but it seems all to have passed away with the wounded, and with the

interment of the corpses. The inhabitants have all come back to their houses, and live not alone on amicable, but seemingly on cordial terms with the stalwart Hessians billeted upon them. Madame of the hotel, who on the 20th of August moved about in a stolid apathy of despair, utterly disregarding any questions that might be put to her, and with hardly energy enough to wring her hands, was now blithe and sprightly, moving about briskly in response to the requirements of her numerous guests. The stains that blood had made on the floors were still visible—indelible probably while the boarding lasts, but Madame's despair was much more evanescent, and with her return to good spirits, the landlady's instinct of charging stiff prices has returned. On the 10th of August, when I asked her whether I should pay her anything for the *quasi* shelter I had obtained for the night under her roof, she only stared blankly in my face, and I could not get an answer from her. Now, when I asked her whether she could give me a bottle of good wine she eagerly replied in the affirmative, and placed before me a really good bottle of Muscat, for which she put on, with a smiling face, the fancy price of 12 francs.

The road from Gorze to Rezonville consists, first of an ascent through a narrow gorge into a corner of the Bois de Vaux, and then it traverses the plain in a line with the close of the battle of Vionville, on the 16th of August. The wood was held strongly by the French in the morning of that day, and the Prussian 8th Army Corps had to storm up the ravine, deploy on the shoulder of the swell in front of the wood, and carry its precincts at the bayonet point. How difficult they had found this undertaking, the many graves in this vicinity too plainly showed. In the dark glades of the Bois I doubt not there still lie the corpses of the unburied dead. The foul carrion crow lazily wheeled above the tree-tops as we drove

through, and I cared not to picture to myself the lonely spot where he should alight. Where the road emerges from the wood was a scene of one of the most bloody episodes of the fight. A Prussian column had come by the road we were now on, and immediately on quitting the shelter of the wood, had been subjected to the fire of a French battery from the right flank, while the French infantry stood waiting for it in front, using meanwhile with terrible effect their Chassepôts. No wonder that the Prussians went down in numbers; the wonder was that any should have survived, far less conquered, through such a terrible ordeal. Up to a lonely little house about half-way across, there were none save Prussian corpses, as there are none now save Prussian graves. At this point, however, the bull-dogs got at the throats of their enemies, and not for nothing. The French dead after this point lay as thickly as the Prussians, and there was quite a bank of slaughter. A little further on the French were the thickest, and before one reached the outskirts of Rezonville there were but very few Prussian corpses. I am now, as must be apparent, drawing on my memory. The day before yesterday all that we saw in the way of traces of what I have been referring to were the many graves and occasional heaps of the *débris* of the battle-field. But I should not like to remain long on this field. Every grave-heap has beside it an eccentric tombstone in the shape of a barrel of chloride of lime; but notwithstanding this disinfectant the taint in the air is unmistakable and indescribably fœtid. In the village of Rezonville are still some of the more severely wounded, and the doctors were heartily glad to see the stores which the English ambulance fourgons contained. At Rezonville the troops I found were Hessians, belonging to the 7th Army Corps. After a short halt, to enable Mr. Lee to distribute his

stores judiciously, we pressed on to Gravelotte, where we were most cordially received by the officers of a battery of artillery quartered there. Stabling was found for the four-gon horses, and a beautiful upper chamber was allocated to us, while we were made free of the larger room downstairs used by the officers as a mess-room. Gravelotte will never recover from the effects of the tremendous cannonade which it sustained from the artillery of both armies on the 18th of August. Hardly a house that does not show the marks of the grenades, and all the corner houses had been pierced for musketry, while the garden walls in the environs were crenellated for the same purpose. The troops lying in Gravelotte have occupied their spare time in devoting attention to the graves of their dead comrades. Some of the monuments are quite pretentious, but all are necessarily of wood. Along with an artillery lieutenant we visited the church which on the evening of the 18th was such a horrible spectacle. Its defenders had been shot down and lay on the stone floor. Some of them had been carried out into the churchyard, but others had been shoved to one side, all round the altar, to make room for the wounded, who were brought in in numbers so great that the doctors, after working all night without intermission, saw daylight dawn on their yet only half-completed labours. Behind the church is a great mound, beneath which lie the many dead. Afterwards we were permitted to go on to the foreposts in front of Chatel St. Germain, looking over to Fort St. Julien. The chain of sentries stands just where it did on the morning of the 20th of August, looking down into the intervening valley. The French have a large cavalry forepost in the bottom of the valley. On the slope around the pretty village of Scy lay the white tents of the French camp which I had seen on the previous day from the top of Mont St. Blaise. Walking some half a mile

in the direction of the Moselle, we came presently on a promontory that juts out into the valley, and commands a view of the whole country. It seemed that at our very feet lay the huge pile of the Cathedral; the tin on its spires flashing up in a watery ray of the morning sun, and the great mass casting a dark shadow across the Place d'Armes. There were no cattle visible on the green stretches of pasture-land, and comparatively few horses; but I noticed several detachments of mounted men, and horses cannot be at one and the same time under the saddle and grazing in the fields.

As we walked back from the extreme foreposts we passed many rifle-pits on the crest of the rising ground forming the sentry-line, and also a regularly constructed battery, with earthworks in front and casemates and magazine in the rear. On the platform were mounted six 12-pounders, and in the rear, near Chatel, were several batteries of field artillery. The 12-pounders look across at Fort St. Julien in the most impudent manner imaginable, as if to say, "Your fortress exists only on our sufferance; we could blow you to little pieces with a round or two if we chose, but we prefer leaving you alone, out of our tender mercy." And St. Quentin on its part seems to look across at the 12-pounders with something of a *risus sardonicus* on its grim grey features.

Returning to Gravelotte, we set out for the completion of our design to make the circuit of the Prussian position. Our road lay past the blackened ruins of a farmhouse, in which, on the afternoon of the 18th of August, 200 French wounded were burnt, by shells fired from French guns. The smell in the shell, which is all that remains of a once large mansion, is horrible. The tiles have fallen in and hidden the charred corpses of the miserables who perished in the conflagration; but here and there sticks up a ghastly blackened hand, or a gartered leg

swathed in discoloured red cloth! The place is one vast grave, and ought to be covered deeply with earth and quicklime as soon as possible, for the sake of the health of the troops lying within range of the taint that now emanates from it. At Malmaison, near the top of the hill, and still further on at Verneville, the fighting on the 18th was very severe, and the memorials of it exist in plenty in the shape of the frequent graves. In a lonely upland valley stands the forlorn and ruined hamlet of Champenoise, utterly burnt out, smashed and pounded in all directions with shells, pitted all over with the dents of Chassepôt bullets, and its precincts full of mounds, below which lie, side by side, defenders and captors. Further to the north, in the rear of Armanvilliers, is a twin battery to the one I saw at Gravelotte, very daintily constructed, and fenced round with *chevaux de frise*, and I rather think some pleasant little surprises in the shape of mines. From Armanvilliers the road trended away to the left to avoid the entrenchments in the vicinity of the foreposts at Saulny, and presently reached the village of Jerusalem. Lying in a sequestered and somewhat isolated tract, few students of war literature have as yet heard much about this tiny namesake of the great Hebrew city of antiquity. Nevertheless, it was the scene of a terrible conflict on the evening of the 18th of August. It had its Titus in the Crown Prince, but there was no Josephus to chronicle the episodes of the fray. Yet as eloquently as any pen could have described them are they indicated now by the silent yet expressive grave-tokens which are sown thickly all round the little spot, whose ruin is so utter that it might, to complete the parallel with its namesake of old, have been sown with salt.

Quitting the plateau lying to the north-west of Fort Plappeville, we drove through a great wood, chiefly of under-

brush, and suddenly came out on a bluff overhanging the valley of the Moselle. Our point was just before Feves, and the view was glorious. Before us, in the valley, we could easily trace the line of the Prussian foreposts stretching across to the river; nearer to Metz again was the French line, and behind it the white tents of the camps, with columns of troops moving about in the interval. We could see the zig zags of Fort Moselle and of the enceinte surrounding the town. At Feves, just below us, and in a splendid position, was a battery of 12-pounders, the same that I had seen speaking to so good purpose on the afternoon of the 7th instant. Getting down into the valley, we crossed the Thionville road, and struck for the temporary wooden barracks erected on the railway to the right front of Maizières, in which was quartered the Fusilier battalion of the 81st Regiment, of whose officers I had made the acquaintance on the 7th. My genial friend the Freiherr von Loewenfeld received me cordially, but there was a cloud on his face, the cause of which presently became apparent. The description which I sent you of the combat at Maizières had, it appears, been translated into the columns of the *Cölnischer Zeitung*, and it had become, therefore, apparent to the officers of the 81st that their gallant regiment had not received its due. It seems that at nine o'clock on the evening of the 7th (at which time I was in full trot on Courcelles with my letter), the 81st retook St. Remy at the bayonet-point, losing in the task five officers and over 100 men. In front of the Freiherr's quarters was another battery fort of 12-pounders, and on the other side of Maizières, before the Château of Arnelange, stood yet another. We crossed the river at Hautconcourt, and came down to this place, which is comparatively on the foreposts, in the gloaming. This morning I quit my good friends of the fourgons, and strike across

for my old quarters with the 4th Regiment at Noisseville or Retonfay.

Château Gras, before Metz, Oct. 23.—I am back again among my old military friends, who received me with a frank and hearty soldierly welcome. But among the "kent faces" that greeted me I missed one or two whom I learnt to reckon friends. The adjutant of the battalion, a joyous lad fresh from the schools, a youngster of eighteen summers, had succumbed to the hardships of the situation. The marrow was not "set" in the growing boy's bones, and where seasoned men find it not an easy matter to keep sickness from assailing them with success, the dart had penetrated through his green frame, and he had been compelled to go back to the Fatherland, a shattered veteran ere he had attained his full stature. I missed, too, another face, that of a lieutenant, whose determination to consider himself well, while as yet the fever had not left him, I had respected in one sense, while in another I had deprecated it. Wounded in the fight by Noisseville, on the 1st of September, he had been sent back to St. Wendel, where in the Lazarette hospital fever had laid hold of him. His wound healed, and the fever in part abated; the soldier lusted to be again with his comrades in the forefront of the battle, and he had quitted the Lazarette, while as yet the dregs of the fever had not been eliminated from his frame. On the day of his arrival he lay beside me on the straw, with the alternate cold and hot fits working their will of him, and then I told him that his return had been premature. My words were made good by the fact that two days after the doctor had peremptorily insisted on his return to St. Wendel, and he has gained nothing by his enterprise save another strain on his constitution.

Such details as these may seem trivial to readers itching for reports of heady fights and important events. But

of heady fights and of important events there have been none since I quitted my position at the front. When such occur, I shall do my best to furnish a narration of them. Meanwhile, such details as these may, to my thinking, serve the province of the background strokes which an artist stipples into his sketches. Such strokes, unimportant in themselves, serve to complete the amenity of a picture, the gaunt, if deep, lines of which would stand out strangely from the canvas, but for such a supplement. The two cases I have alluded to have no inconsiderable interest in a larger sense. The battalion has about twenty officers as its complement; two out of this complement have "gone sick" within a week. This is ten per cent. I am officially informed that this is just a shade over the sick per-centage of the battalion, and also of the brigade. Exclusive of wounded, there are nine per cent. of the investing force in this section of the environment off duty from sickness. The ordinary per-centage in war time is five per cent.; the other four per cent. is the result of the hardships—the inevitable consequence of arduous duty and foul weather—which the troops before Metz are now undergoing. It must, however, be remembered, that of this per-centage of sick a considerable proportion consists of men suffering from comparatively slight and temporary illness, and who recover in the field Lazarettes without it being necessary to send them back into Germany. From three to four per cent. of the gross total of cases are of this character, the absence from duty of the men averaging from a week to ten days. Here we are on high ground, and comparatively out of reach of the dank fogs which chill and soften the bones of the men in the valley by the Moselle. In that low-lying district, I am sorry I have to report that the per-centage of sickness is greater, reaching as high in some places as fifteen per cent. About the

middle of the month, with the change of the weather, there was, as was but natural, a sudden increase of sickness; but since then the diminution has been considerable and continuous. Dysentery and rheumatism are the chief diseases. Both have a tendency toward aggravation into fever. The former is prone to assume a typhoid form, the latter becomes aggravated into that terrible infliction, rheumatic fever. In the low-lying district there is also a good deal of that disorder which the German language so expressively designates as *wechsel-fieber*; corresponding to our ague, with its hot and cold fits. This in its turn degenerates into intermittent fever with a propensity to typhus, but quinine profusely administered is potent enough in most cases to ward off this aggravation. I enter into these details the more readily because I have reason to believe that reports have gone forth to the effect that the Prussian troops around Metz "are dying like rotten sheep." Such a statement contains its own refutation to one with eyes in his head. Whether a man dies "like a rotten sheep," or like the soldier of a civilized country, he equally demands interment. Burials are very rare in the field Lazarettes, and recent graves in their vicinity equally so. I have had statistics placed at my disposal from which to derive authentic materials for the facts and figures which I have stated; and on the part of the Prussian authorities there is as little disposition to conceal the truth as to digest the erroneous and haphazard statements, with "rotten sheep" as their watchword, to which I have alluded. Intimately connected with the question of health is that of heart and spirits. As regards these, I can report in the most favourable terms. In damp great-coats and muddy boots the soldiers still cheerily raise the chorus of "Die Wacht am Rhein," with as hearty an energy as when the summer sun shone down upon them, and the roads were as dry

as Piccadilly before the water-carts have traversed it. Assuming for the moment that this siege were to last the winter, my opinion is that the beleaguering army is over the worst of it, as regards strain on their health and physique. All are now housed, roughly enough it is true in places; but then remember how the men have got seasoned. Wood is plentiful for fuel, and will be so all the winter, at the expense, it is true, of the amenity of the environs of the villages and the châteaux, but that is a matter not to be studied when put into competition with wet clothes and cold bodies. Then our internal welfare, in so far as plentiful provisions and good comforting liquids can conduce thereunto, is much ameliorated. In many of the villages in the second and third line enterprising merchants have set up stores, from which anything in reason can be procured. I don't know indeed that the Kaufmann in Ste. Barbe, just behind us here, keeps Jockey Club scent, or that he is in correspondence with Pim's in the matter of barrelled oysters, but he has decent cognac, good red wine, a cheese calculated to offend neither the nose nor the palate, sardines, caviare, and even the luxury of anchovy sauce.

A friend has kindly kept for me a little diary of the siege events on this face which have occurred since I retired to Saarbruck, but they are of so little importance as not to call for reproduction. The only actual sortie made by the French troops, and that in comparatively small numbers, was on the 16th inst., in the direction of the Brasserie. Of course they were driven back. They could have hoped for nothing else. All the damage they did was to shoot through the chest the *feldwebel* of the 6th Company. King Wilhelm had no better non-commissioned officer in all his vast army. Strauss smoked his cigar while the doctor cut the bullet out of

his back, the lieutenant beside whom he was shot holding him up when the operation was being performed. Then he quietly squared up his company-book, and counting the money in his hands (the *feldwebel* is the pay-sergeant of the company) handed everything over to his successor in right trim, and went away philosophically in the waggon to a lazaretto.

French deserters from Metz are becoming quite a nuisance. I telegraphed yesterday to you about a lying hound whom I encountered, and most of them may be entered in the same category. On the 20th an officer and fifty men of the infantry came into the Prussian lines here in a body. They were brought to Glatigny, and underwent the usual *pro formâ* examination. The officer stated that everything but horse flesh was practically exhausted in Metz. What else was to the fore the Line troops saw nothing of, except a liquor ration. The Guards still continued to receive a few "extras," and this circumstance so excited the jealousy of the Line men, that between the two branches of the service there existed a bitter hostility. An epidemic, resulting from starvation, had set in among the horses. This, if true, I reckon the most important piece of intelligence we have received for some time respecting the internal condition of Metz. We know here that the French horses cannot have a very clovery time of it. We see them being driven from place to place over the brown and down-trodden pasture-land, and three were captured by a patrol the other day which would have been of value to a veterinary college as excellent subjects from which, without either previous slaughter or vivisection, to study anatomy. But a positive epidemic among the horses we have not hitherto heard of, and I need not point to its importance as a compelling argument towards capitulation. Yesterday, twenty French soldiers with an officer

very adroitly suffered themselves to be taken prisoners in front of Servigny. They came out of the Bois de Grimont on the pretext of a foraging expedition, but there is no doubt with the express intention of offering a temptation for their being made prisoners. Here are seventy virtual deserters in twenty-four hours from the garrison of Metz. At other points, as I learnt on my circuit, they are swarming in, and the aggregate must be large. It is a curious circumstance that none of the *quasi* fugitives are ever fired upon. I have learned to have a great respect for Bazaine, and I cannot help imagining he is not only cognizant, but the instigator of these wholesale desertions. It is hardly a secret that his recent offer was the surrender of his army as prisoners of war, exclusive of the fortress of Metz and its outworks. The Prussian authorities simply laughed at this cool proposal; but these desertions would seem to indicate an attempt on Bazaine's part to carry out his programme piecemeal. Let the Prussians alone for recognizing the bent of tactics like these. A few deserters are useful, and not to be discouraged. Assume that none of them speak the truth; King David tells us that "all men are liars," and yet from our fellow-men's utterances we contrive to extract some grains of truth. In like manner a little wheat can be winnowed out of the chaff of a deserter's farragos, and one or two are acceptable. When a number come, they represent simply so much more food to the good in Metz, and proportionate postponement of the capitulation. You will not be surprised, therefore, that the order has been issued to receive no more bodies of deserters into the lines, but to send them back whence they came by the powerful argument of the needle-gun. It would be interesting to know how it is that so many of the deserters are drunk when they come. Is strong drink on tap in the outposts round Metz, or are the men

dosed for the attempt? The latter hypothesis might seem to be borne out by the fact, of which I have been assured, not by the French prisoners alone, but by Prussian doctors who administered to the French wounded, that the French tirailleurs who pushed so boldly to the front at Maizières on the 7th were all full of brandy. *Ichabod! Ichabod!* How has the glory departed from the French arms when we find their leaders compelled to infuse Dutch courage into their soldiers! The French were the readiest to scorn the Russian serf-soldier because when he came up through the fog-wreaths on the morning of Inkermann, his sluggish pulses had been quickened by corn schnaps. Now, it would seem that they find the same unsoldier-like stimulant requisite in their own case.

I have heard Count Bismarck compared to an elephant's trunk, as one for whom nothing was too great or too small. But Bismarck is not the only Prussian who finds time in the whirl of great events to contradict an inventive correspondent, or to put himself straight with the world on a seemingly trivial point. I was much amused by an item in last night's orders from Prince Frederick Charles's head-quarters. It was to the effect that whereas an unprincipled rascal of a Hamburg cigar merchant had been selling boxes of cigars to the troops, the upper tier of which consisted of good weeds, while the lower ones were unmitigated trash, the military authorities of any place where this astute gentleman should present himself, were enjoined to lay hold of him and transmit him to Prince Frederick Charles's head-quarters at Corny. At such an entry one may smile, but I defy him to refrain from respecting the all-pervading care and watchfulness which takes cognizance of such a matter as this. In such care and watchfulness lies the root of much of the Prussian success. A campaign is not made victorious

by dint of fighting alone—how much success depends on efficient organization, even as regards seeming trifles! I regret that the British military administration have not attained the perception, or at all events have not chosen to act on the same. Another quaint entry in general orders some time ago occurs to me as I write—"Whereas a gold watch has been found by ———, in the vicinity of Ars-sur-Moselle, the owner may have it, on giving a description, by application to the Etappen Command."

Château-Gras, a little distance to the front of Ste. Barbe, must have been a beautiful village before the tide of war came and strewed sand and shingle over its charms. A fine old château is the principal building in it, the noble garden of which is very little injured, while the furniture has also suffered very little. In a room on the ground floor the books still stand in the long ranges of shelves upon the wall. When the nobleman who owns it comes back, he will have an agreeable surprise. So careful are the Prussians to prevent injury to property, that on the door of every room occupied by them is pasted an inventory of its contents, for which the successive occupants are held responsible, just as in a barracks at home. The château is now occupied by troops, but till lately was a large Feld Lazareth, occupied by the wounded of the fights before Noisseville of the 31st of August and 1st of September. The smell of the chloride of lime is still so powerful in the beautiful rooms, that some of the officers prefer more modest quarters in the houses of the village. When the owner of the château comes back, he will find that the war has left him a legacy, the memory of which will not speedily fade out. Of the wounded in the great lazarette not a few succumbed before the grim king of terrors, more potent than the bullets and shells of the enemy. In a quiet corner of the garden, looking out through the trees

on to St. Julien, St. Quentin, Les Bottes, and the great towers of the Cathedral in the centre, is a graveyard, where lie those who died of their wounds in the lazarette. It is prettily enclosed with a wooden paling. The one great grave, over 100 yards in length, is banked up with green sods, and the surface trimly raked. It is flanked by a great wooden cross bearing the simple inscription :—"Hier Ruhen 285 Preussische und 5 Französische tapfere Krieger." There are besides several graves of officers, which are adorned with box-wood crosses planted in the soil, and with wreaths of immortelles.

Petit Marais, before Metz, Oct. 25, Morning.—Deserters continue to afford the principal topic for conversation. It is a clever idea of Bazaine, now that his proposal for surrendering his army without the capitulation of the fortress has been rejected, to work off his army by detail. That this is the policy I think there can be no reasonable doubt. An officer and fifty men cannot walk away in a body, as they did yesterday in front of Noisseville, without being interrupted, if any one cared to do so, and the French leaders must have become awakened to the fact that the Prussian authorities had comprehended the little game when they saw the little party sent back the way they came. We receive deserters who come in singly or in pairs, because their information is more or less useful. From one of these information of considerable exactitude and apparent truthfulness was received last night. He spoke of a rapid and continuous diminution in the rations served out to the troops, and of increasing irregularity in the supply. Eight days ago the bread ration was half a pound a day for each man. Now it is reduced to four ounces, and there is difficulty in procuring this morsel. The man understood that the inhabitants of Metz re-

ceived the same rations as the Guards who lie around Bazaine at St. Martin, and who receive rather more food than the other troops, and are used, by reason of their superior discipline and their greater contentment, as a means of keeping in some semblance of order the Line regiments. To each *peloton* a live horse is given per day, but the man describes the brutes as consisting of little else than bones and hide. There can be little wonder that the number of sick is greatly on the increase under such circumstances. Out of 800 men, of which this man's battalion consisted, 200 were sick and unfit for duty. Those who nominally are able are, he says, in a state of great weakness, and certainly his own appearance corroborated this statement.

Various statements appear to have been made within the last day or two by the French generals to their troops, to keep them from falling into utter despondency. I telegraphed to you yesterday one piece of information of this character. Another man brings out a cock-and-bull story about a general order, to the effect that the Empress was to arrive in Metz yesterday, and to assume the supreme power, and that then to-day the whole army was to march away to the north by permission of the Prussians. The authorities appear to have interpreted these statements as giving intimation of a sortie in great force towards the north to-morrow. General orders to-day contained a formal intimation that the negotiations regarding capitulation, which had been going on, had been definitely broken off. Orders are issued with a view to cope with a sortie, should it occur, to-morrow. The line to the north of Metz on both sides of the river has been greatly strengthened, and the troops in the third line all round are called out, taking place, at five o'clock this morning, in positions enabling them to act efficiently as reserves and supports for the first and second lines.

On the face of things it would seem that a sortie to-day is physically impossible. It has rained with hardly any intermission for three days, and it rains now. Except where the macadam of the *chaussées* affords a hard bottom under the mud, the country cannot be traversed on foot. One flounders helplessly in the slippery stuff till he gets to a deeper place than usual, and then has to struggle vehemently to prevent himself from sticking outright. No regiment could keep its formation in ground so holding, and to move artillery or train, except on the macadamized roads, must be utterly impossible. Nevertheless the Prussian troops are waiting for what, if it comes at all, must be the last effort, and that one made out of pure Quixotry. I write this hurried and short letter, so to speak, with foot in stirrup. I am going to ride round to the Moselle valley, down which, as on the 7th, the chief effort of the sortie must come, if it be made at all, which I doubt. The quietude for the last few days of the forts and foreposts is accounted for by a deserter, who states that an order has been issued to reserve the fire, and reprobating the purposeless blazing into space which has hitherto been a characteristic of the defence. It may be straining a point to interpret this into signifying shortness of ammunition. Last night there was a loud explosion on the outskirts of Metz. It is thought one of the powder-magazines had blown up.

Château-Gras, Oct. 24.—This has been a great day with us here in Château-Gras. It was our doctor's birthday, and there was no reason why we should not keep it while the generals are finishing the more serious business. Our doctor is a man unknown to fame, but he deserves it more than many a man who has earned it. He is of the fighting, jolly style of medico: although his business is to cure wounds, he has no objection, but the contrary, to cut out work for himself. If you met him in Cork,

you would unhesitatingly set him down as a native, with his merry black eyes, wide laughing mouth, and—how shall I put it delicately?—his nose with the Hibernian bend. And it was the birthday of this excellent fellow.

I could not make out in the morning why *appel* was hurried over so rapidly; but I was soon to learn. The adjutant tucked my arm under his, and marched me off into the château. Although the name of the owner of this residence is Mons. d'Espagne, his château is by no means *en Espagne;* on the contrary, it is a substantially-built edifice, with very handsome rooms, affording excellent quarters, if one does not mind semi-asphyxiation with chloride of lime. Of the *salle* the officers have made a mess-room, and it was into this fine apartment that the adjutant guided me about ten o'clock this morning. We were, one and all, it seemed, the guests of the doctor on this the anniversary of his natal morn. Nor was the doctor hospitable without the means. A certain good lady who calls him husband, and who dwells in Königsberg, had not forgotten the day, and as a birthday present had sent her good man a great chest. The sum total of the contents of that chest the world through me can never know. The enumeration I heard indeed, but I lost the tally when the doctor was about half through it. Suffice it to say, that the table groaned under a load of delicacies. I have seen a telegram from Berlin to the effect that the troops before Metz were living on mutton. The telegraphist would have opened his eyes had he dropped in this morning. There was *schinken* and boiled ham, there was a German sausage as big as the good heart of the doctor's wife, there was a snug little barrel of *sardellen*, pickled with bay-leaves; there was German gingerbread and rusks; there was fresh butter, and there was *compot* of plums, and I don't know what all else. Then, for drink, there was the

choice of Malaga and claret, rum, brandy, Hamburg bitters and absinthe, and a hearty welcome to season all. We have a curious way of eating in the foreposts—what may be styled a miscellaneous manner of feeding. Sausage, gingerbread, sardines, and *compot* are seen on one plate at once, and serve to season one another in a very impartial way. I don't think the doctor could reasonably complain of the appetites which were brought to his feast. He had one appetite of which he could have had no anticipation. Just as we were in the middle of the feast, a miserable devil of a French deserter was brought in from the foreposts. I never before saw the wolfish glare of absolute hunger darting from a man's eyes. Wet, dirty, half-rotten seemingly from scurvy, with puffed lips and hollow cheeks, this gaunt spectacle of a man devoured the food with his great staring eyes. He could not reply to any questions, so concentrated was he upon his gaze at our breakfast, and when the *hauptmann* threw him the meaty ham-bone, it positively made one shudder to see the dog-like style in which he fell a-worrying of it. When all, including, I hope, the poor wretch in the lobby, had eaten their fill, the senior *hauptmann* called for full glasses, and in a neat speech proposed the doctor's health. The doctor was very waggish in his reply. He suggested we should dedicate a bumper to St. Julien and Les Bottes, because they had been courteous enough not to intervene to the detriment of the crockeryware, and expressed further a fervent wish that Bazaine were making one of the company. By twelve o'clock the doctor was drunk out—that is, his stores were—but a happy thought struck a lieutenant concerning a barrel of beer which he had in his room. This was fetched, and its contents went the way of the doctor's stores.

As we broke up, I heard the word go round that there would

be a "picnic" in the evening. One is apt to associate the idea of a picnic with leafy glades, blue muslin, bad champagne, and lobster salad. None of these *agréments* had we here. The rain was falling fast, the winter wind was blowing bitterly, and the idea of a picnic seemed about as wild as would have been the suggestion of an oratory. But nevertheless the "picnic" came off, although not quite according to my preconceived notions of this institution. It was an indoor picnic; in point of fact, it took place in the hall where the doctor gave his breakfast. It was on the mutual co-operation principle —everybody was expected to bring something. My contribution was a box of sardines, a lump of butter, and a bottle of rum. I am afraid this was not quite up to the general mark; but what I had I gave—I could no more. I stood in the lobby awhile watching the arrivals and their several contributions. One *hauptmann* was accompanied by his servant carrying half a dozen of red wine, a lieutenant had a leg of mutton and a bag full of sugar under his cloak. The hall looked quite civilized. On the great round table in the centre stood an actual moderator lamp, with a painted shade atop of it, its pedestal resting on a mat. Talk of war times, here was refinement with a vengeance! A great wood fire blazed cheerfully on the hearth, and the glasses—somewhat nondescript in shape and size, it is true—sparkled on the board. After a brief pause the first service of tipple was brought in, contained in a white soup-tureen and an antique china vase. The tipple was very good—I regret being unable to furnish the recipe for its composition. I may state, however, that among the ingredients were red wine, white wine, rum, cognac, schnapps, cloves, and cinnamon. Of the proportions of each I could learn nothing. I incline to the opinion that a "stock" pot

with the red wine was put on, and as contributions came in, that they were emptied into the pot promiscuously.

For about two hours conversation, alternated with story-telling, was the order of the evening. The talk fell once upon the causes of the French defeats, and after various explanations had been started, a sententious premier lieutenant, who had not previously opened his mouth, struck in with this original illustration and very sound theory:—"The chief rabbi of the Dantzic Jews had taken a new house, and his flock determined to stock his wine-butt for him. An evening was set apart for the affair, and one after another the Jews went down into the cellar and emptied each his bottle into the big vat. When the rabbi came next day to draw off his dinner wine, he found there was nothing in the cask but water. Each and every Jew had said to himself that one bottle of water could never be noticed in so great a quantity of wine, and all acting up to this, the rabbi had not got a drop of wine in his butt. Now it was just the same with the French army. One soldier said to himself that it would not matter a copper if he sneaked away; in so great a multitude he would not be missed. But the devil of it was that one and all took this line of reasoning, and the result was, that nobody was left to look our battalions in the face." Everybody laughed at the premier lieutenant's quaint illustration, and then we had a stand-up supper at the sideboard. That finished, singing was the order of the evening. It surprised me not a little when one of the officers struck up "My heart's in the Highlands," and almost all were able to chime in, not alone with the tune, but the words. The doctor treated us to a composition of his own, composed to illustrate passing events, for the burden of it was—"The Bois de Grimont oh!" The Bois de Grimont is the

wood out of which the French sharpshooters so persistently pepper away at our foreposts. Encouraged by the success of this effort, he gave us another song *pour l'occasion*, the chorus of which mixed up "Mercy-le-Haut," and "Der Teufel," in some mysterious manner. It may interest the British music-hall patrons to know that a translation of "The Captain with the Whiskers," is one of the chiefest favourites with the Prussian officers. They rattle away at its lively chorus with great delight. We had it to-night over and over again. At ten o'clock, the "stock" pot being empty, we broke up with great joviality. My three room-companions are now slumbering profoundly on the common straw, to which I also now betake myself. Nothing new in siege operations. Several bodies of deserters driven back to-day by the Prussian foreposts. Weather still "Novembery" in the extreme.

CHAPTER XII.

THE capitulation of Metz, with the whole army of Marshal Bazaine encamped under its walls, took place on the 27th of October, seventy days after the battle of Gravelotte. Three Marshals of France, 6,000 officers, and 173,000 men were included in the surrender. The scenes which followed the capitulation showed that some of the corps had become demoralized, but the men of the Imperial Guard had preserved their discipline and self-respect to the last, and took leave of their officers with demonstrations of strong regard.

Metz, Oct. 29.—After all our long waiting from day to day in anticipation of the capitulation of Metz, that event came upon us with a strange suddenness. It was only a few days ago that it was mentioned in the general orders from the Prussian head-quarters that the negotiations had definitively closed; and when men heard this they set their teeth hard, and prepared for another spell of waiting, variegated with fighting. But there were symptoms of the end being imminent in the haggard deserters who came among us from day to day, with their longing looks at our black bread and flesh. Another symptom of the end I became acquainted with. Orders were issued several days ago to the railway people in Saarbruck to have material in readiness for repairing the railway communication direct into Metz. This indicated

what was expected at head-quarters, and was a sign of the times which I thought it not politic to disregard. But still, when the report ran round the regiment, on the afternoon of the 27th, that the capitulation had actually been negotiated, some found it difficult to realize the fact—confirmation was wanting. It was true that the generals commanding the several Army Corps had been summoned to Frescati by an order of Prince Frederick Charles; but everything looked so much in the ordinary way, that people could not realize the fact of the capitulation. Men went on the field-watch as usual, and the confronting foreposts still continued to exchange shots. No white flag was visible, and the unbelieving Thomases of the 4th shrugged their shoulders, and would have none of the tidings. The story then got wind that all that had happened was the capitulation of Bazaine's army without the fortress. This proposition it was known the Prussian authorities had already rejected, and it was argued from the prevalence of the report to this effect, that the whole story about the capitulation was a fabrication. I now proceed to give you details of the manner in which the occupation and disarmament were effected.

At twelve o'clock yesterday forenoon each of the outlying fortresses was taken possession of by two battalions of Prussian infantry, a squadron of cavalry, one heavy battery without tumbrils, 100 artillerymen with the complement of officers, and an engineer detachment. The following is the apportionment of the force of occupation. The troops occupying

St. Quentin	were found by		15th Infantry Division.
Plappeville	,,	,,	3rd Army Corps.
St. Julien	,,	,,	1st Army Corps.
Queleu	,,	,,	8th Army Corps.
St. Privat	,,	,,	Hessian Division.

At the same hour a battalion of the 7th Army Corps marched forward, and took possession of La Porte Serpenoise, one of the gates of Metz, and another battalion from the same corps occupied the Porte Moselle. Two hours before the occupation of the fortress, I should observe, there were sent forward from each of the occupying detachments an artillery officer and a small body of under-officers, accompanied by engineers, to take over the powder-magazines and the respective forts, and they sent out the report to the effect that all was in order before the troops were allowed to march in. This precaution was no doubt dictated by a recollection of the catastrophe at Laon.

At one o'clock yesterday it was ordered that the French army should formally lay down its arms. There was no set ceremony, yet the affair was imposing from its very simplicity. It was conducted in detail, each corps laying down its arms in the neighbourhood of its own station. I saw the 3rd Army Corps—that of Lebœuf—disarm itself. The Marshal himself came first, a scowl upon his swarthy features. He wheeled to one side, and stood by the single Prussian officer whose duty it was to superintend the stacking of the arms. Regiment after regiment the men defiled past, piling their arms in great heaps at the word of command from their own officers, who gave their parole, and were allowed to retain their swords. This applies to most. There were, however, some who declined to accept the terms, and who preferred going with their men into captivity in Prussia. These laid down their swords as the men did their Chassepôts, building quite a little heap of them to the right of the great stacks of rifles. The disarmed French troops then returned into their bivouacs, which they occupied for one night more, before quitting for other bivouacs round which shall stand Prussian

sentries. For this last night they preserved a semblance of freedom. The Prussians left them to themselves. Except in the forts and at the two gates I have mentioned, not a spiked helmet was to be seen nearer Metz than had been seen a week before. The *feldwachts* were mounted as usual, the *replies* were established, and the troops stood fast as ever in their long and weary watch around Metz.

This morning the Frenchmen came forth and rendered themselves to their captors—corps by corps, and under the command of their own officers. The Sixth Corps (Canrobert's) came from its bivouac by Woippy to Ladonchamps, where on the 7th so many of its members had stained the soil with their blood. Their prison-bivouac is on the plain in the rear of the wrecked and burnt village. The Seventh Corps, that of Ladmirault, came out over the ridge between St. Quentin and Plappeville, and found quarters—inhospitable enough, I fear—on the bleak plateau of St. Maurice. The Imperial Guard marched down to Longeville, crossed the railway-bridge at Tournebride, passed on to Frescati to the left, and found their bivouac in the plain between Orly and Augny. The garrison of Metz itself, consisting of about 20,000 men, chiefly Mobile Guards, marched by Le Sablon, past the ruined village of Magny, and so forward to the outskirts of St. Thiebault. The Second Corps (Frossard's), with Laveauconfied's Division and the 4th Brigade, came out past La Posette on the great Strasburg *chaussée*, and found their bivouac behind the village of Grigy. The Third Corps (that of Lebœuf) came out among us of the 1st Prussian Army Corps, along the *chaussée* leading to Saarlouis. Each corps, as it marched out, was received by the Prussian troops covering the respective section of the environment. They were led by their own officers.

who formally handed over their men to the Prussian officers, and then those of them who had given their parole were at liberty to quit the ranks and return to Metz. The men under the command of their under-officers were then marched out to the bivouac-places, which had previously been partly prepared; wood for fires having been collected, and a supply of provisions being ready for distribution.

I was with the First Army Corps when it took up its position to receive the corps of Lebœuf. From all the villages around—the villages inhabited for so many weary weeks, the villages made memorable by fights, by burnings, by graves, by sickness, and by deaths—streamed the regiments on to the *chaussée*. There had been much rain during the night, and although the sun broke out about ten o'clock, the watery haze hung about the bottoms of the valleys, and the mud splashed as the troops strode through it. Mud! why, we have had nothing but mud for weeks, and should we mind it now, looking at the errand on which we are bound? No. The "Wacht am Rhein" rises lustily from the pioneers in the front, and the regiments as they come down the side-roads catch up the strain. On we go past the Brasserie, with the grenade-pits, the graves, and the entrenchments around it—itself a mere heap of shattered bricks—on to the gentle slope behind the village of Louvallière. Then right and left wheeled the heavy columns, leaving the *chaussée* open, a parallelogram of about 100 feet in width on each side of it. In front of the Brasserie stood the artillery, before the artillery the serried ranks of brass-spiked helmets all the way down the gentle slope, almost to Louvallière. Arms were piled, and there the Prussians waited for the advent of the army with which it almost seemed, through the length of time that we had confronted each other, that we could claim

a kind of personal acquaintance. While the troops waited I pushed forward towards Metz to meet the Frenchmen. Already, it is true, we had plenty of Frenchmen, but they were all civilians, and there were Frenchwomen too, and French children. The road had been opened this morning, and they came crowding out, the poor creatures who had abandoned their village homes and crowded into the town when the pennons of the Uhlans had shown themselves on the fringes of the villages. On they came, waggon-load after waggon-load, with their trumpery household goods and their agricultural implements piled on the waggons behind the women and children. They knew not what it was that they had come out for to see. Perhaps they expected to find their cottage homes as they had left them—not roofless, wrecked, utterly ruined as is the grim reality. Louvallière seemed to give the first shock to their cheerfulness. Gaunt and grim stood its houses, burnt to the shell, the graves lying all around, the holes in the fields where the shells had burst, the breastworks behind which had stood the Prussian foreposts. As each waggon and each knot of peasants came into Lauvallière there was a halt, and full many a "Mon Dieu!" In Lauvallière there is a large tannery, which must have employed many workmen, and been an important and profitable concern. It is now a mere shell—not a fragment of the woodwork is left. This forenoon I chanced upon its owner standing on the bluff over against his property, and gazing upon it in moody silence. Twenty paces farther on I came on a little group, the extreme pathos of which made my heart swell. It was a family, and they sat in front of what had once been their home. That home was now roofless. The stones of the walls were all that was left. The garden was a wreck, and the whole scene was concentrated desolation. The husband

leant against the wall, his arms folded, and his head on his chest. The wife sat on the wet ground, weeping over the babe at her breast. Two elder children stared around them with wonder and unconcern—too young to realize the misfortune which had overtaken all the family. The silence of the grief-stricken group was more eloquent than any words. No home, no food, a waggon and a couple of starved horses, a field with four graves in it. This is the brief summary of the belongings and condition of the family. All are alike; although this family was the one I happened to see, because the home lay on my road in Lauvallière, the same piteous sight must ere now be visible by every house in every village all around Metz. What need for me to occupy space by writing of what every one with a grain of human sympathy in his composition can picture and mourn for himself?

If the horses were lean, I saw no evidence of starvation in the features of the people I met. The stream of *émigrés* continued as I came up the slope on the flat, on the edge of which lies the improvised fortification of the village of Belle Croix—that which, in this correspondence, I have distinguished as "Little Belle Croix," to distinguish it from the great fort of the same name. Belle Croix was ghastly in its utter solitude. Burnt and shattered by Prussian shells, it must nevertheless have been a very strong position. All round the entrenchment, across the road, is a moat of some depth. The angles are stockades, the walls loopholed, and there still stand in position a couple of field-guns, which, as the Prussians know to their cost, many a time were located with great skill. Owing to the block caused by the entrenchment the road had been diverted. It had been little enough used before this morning. The grass grew thickly on the *chaussée* between Louvallière and Belle Croix. As the peasant-waggons came crowding

out, they stuck in the heavy mire of this *détour*, and many were the "sacrés" before they were started again, the lean horses being too weak to pull them through the heavy ground. It is just in front of this village of Belle Croix where is the road both leading to Saarlouis and Saarbruck. When I had passed Belle Croix, I could not help owning to myself that I had never till then succeeded in forming a proper conception of the real strength of the natural position of Metz. On the right, with a valley intervening like a deep trench, lay the blunt-topped mountain crowned by Fort St. Julien. On its slope were the bivouac-fires of the troops of Lebœuf. Nothing could venture on this slope—a great natural glacis—so long as Fort St. Julien thought proper to forbid the passage. On my left, also on an eminence, although, from the positions whence I had previously seen it, it appeared to be on a flat, lay Fort Queleu, square and massive, dominating the plateau to the left of the *chaussée*. But this plateau is closed in Metzward by a fortification all to itself—the great earthwork of Les Bottes, whose grenades had so often burst in disagreeable proximity to me, and which now stood solitary and empty, with not even a sentry on its earthen summit. Over the top of Fort Les Bottes were visible the towers of the cathedral, and the picture was framed in by the background of that great and elevated ridge of which the two chief peaks are crowned by Forts St. Quentin and Plappeville.

It was just beyond Les Bottes that I met the first French soldier—a cavalryman of the Line. The fellow was as drunk as he well could be to be able to move at all. He staggered forward in tacks, dropping his kit piecemeal as he came. At a bend in the road behind Four-à-Chaux, I came upon the head of the prisoner column, marching onward for their reception at the Brasserie. The men were in a very miserable state, covered with mud, wet—

sodden seemingly, indeed, through and through with wet—many of their faces blotched and scabbed with scurvy, and quite one-third in a state of drunkenness. Not a few were in a state of bestial drunkenness, their clothes disarranged, and decency utterly disregarded. A little farther on, and right and left, lay the great bivouac before Fort Belle Croix. The troops were being collected by their officers in *peloton* previously to being marched out, and several columns were already converging on the great *chaussée*. As each body got the order to go forward, a cheer came from the slovenly and dislocated ranks, and from the columns on the march there broke out at intervals a fitful chorus of some lively marching song. Most of the officers were grave, taciturn, and downcast. Surely they must have despised the reckless throng which they nominally commanded. The demoralization of the Metz army is not so great as was that of the Sedan army, but it is very great. The men obey their officers and regard the sound of the bugle after a fashion, but it is evident that they are utterly unaffected by the catastrophe which has befallen the arms of their country, and are eager only to get somewhere where a full meal of victuals awaits them. Poor wretches! after all, it is not fair to be too severe on their disorganization. How near actual starvation they had come to before their leader would give up the game I shall narrate before I conclude this letter.

Passing the columns of prisoners at a canter, I was back again before the Brasserie ere the front of that column had reached the place where stood the Prussians waiting for them. The dismounted cavalry came first, followed by the artillery; last of all came the infantry of the line. The cavalry seemed to have lost all self-respect; they greeted the Prussians with cheering, and several men broke from the ranks and slouched forward through the

mud with intent to salute with a spirituous kiss the Prussian officers standing in front of their companies. It was curious to notice the opposite idiosyncrasies of the two nationalities. Grave and stern stood the Prussian victors, with, as it seemed, a silent pity rather than contempt for the demented tatterdemalions who proffered them the undesirable greeting; while the Frenchmen chattered and gesticulated, "sacréed" and spluttered, sang and laughed, marched through the gauntlet of humiliation. The officers quitted their commands as each reached the alley fringed by the Prussian battalions, and returned to Metz or the vicinity. The troops comprising the whole of the Third Corps, till yesterday under the command of Lebœuf, and numbering about 23,000 men, were escorted to a position between Château-Gras and Retonfay, where was fixed the site for their bivouac. The positions of the other bivouacs I have already detailed. The guards for the French prisoners are to be contributed in rotation by the several divisions. The daily quota for the bivouac at Château-Gras is four battalions of infantry, one battery of artillery, and one squadron of cavalry. In command of it has been placed Colonel von Deitzen Hennig, of the 4th Regiment, his adjutant being Lieutenant von Verzen. Food has been collected for the supply of the prisoners, who will have to bivouac in the open air. From to-morrow, daily drafts, each 3,000 strong, will be sent into Germany *viâ* Saarbruck and Saarlouis. In all, the capture consists of 173,000 men, including three marshals, 47 general officers, 6,000 regimental officers, and about 500 guns. Of the latter, a large proportion is of course heavy artillery, much of which can be utilized in the siege of Paris, if that event really takes place. I may as well conclude my details as to the Prussian dispositions. General Kummer, hitherto in command of the Landwehr, is appointed commandant of Metz. He has taken up his

quarters in the house recently occupied by the French Commandant on the Place d'Armes. General von Zastrow takes the control of all arrangements connected with the transport of the prisoners and the quartermastership generally of the district around Metz and as far as Thionville. It is anticipated that by seven days all the prisoners will have been sent away. The Prussian army before Metz is destined to disruption. Two Army Corps will march towards Lille, two more towards Besançon, and then there will be left a considerable force to be sent on to Paris.

After I had seen Lebœuf's command taken over by the 1st Army Corps, I returned towards Metz, meeting on my way a stream of straggling soldiers who had missed their corps, and were staggering out under loads of tents, blankets, and what not. The environs of the town are very desolate and very filthy. Mud, raw horseflesh, burnt-out bivouac fires, huts made of the branches of trees, old women and skeleton horses, are the leading characteristics. There was no difficulty in getting into the town, where I found the shops all open, and, to all appearance, no scarcity. Meat hung in the butchers' shops, the cafés were crowded, and there appeared no exhaustion in the stocks of the shops devoted to the sale of any material. Tobacco was plentiful, wine, spirits, and liquors in great abundance. Making my way to the Hôtel de l'Europe, I found it crowded with French officers; and I also found there one Englishman, Dr. Ward, of the International Society for the Succour of the Wounded, who has just been decorated by the French military authorities for his attention to the wounded; and two Americans, Dr. Good, of the same society, and who has also been decorated; and Mr. Eustis, a commercial gentleman, who had spent forty-eight days of the siege in prison under suspicion of being a spy. The spy

mania has raged very strongly in Metz. Seventy-eight persons were arrested on suspicion in one day. Eight in all have been shot as convicted spies, including the notorious Schull, to whose adroitness and accurate information the French believe Von Moltke was indebted for his knowledge of the weakness of the French dispositions on the frontier, and for the hint which he utilized into the successes at Wörth and Weissenburg. I don't think I can do better than give you, in a tabular form, the tariff of prices for food now ruling in Metz:—

Beef	8 francs per lb.
Horseflesh . . .	10 centimes to 2 francs per lb.: "choice horse," the tender loin, fetches the latter price.
Eggs	1 franc each: have been 1f. 20c.
Fowls	20 francs each.
Pike (fish) . . .	8 francs per lb.
Coffee	6 francs per lb.
Ham	8 francs per lb.
Cheese	40 francs per lb. (all nominal done.)
Salt	5 francs per lb.
Geese, fat. . . .	65 francs per pair paid yesterday.
Oats	120 francs for sack of 200 lb.
Horses.	16 francs each: to-day no market any price.
Chocolate. . . .	5 francs per lb.
Bread	White, none since 16th inst.; brown 4½ sous per lb.
Mutton	None for two months.
Wine	Plentiful, and old prices maintained; bottle of champagne for 7 francs.

Notwithstanding these extraordinary prices, the tariff in the Hôtel de l'Europe is much the same as usual. I dined

there this evening at the *table d'hôte* for 7 francs, including half a bottle of wine. Breakfast is *à la carte*, about 7 francs; bottle of champagne, 7 francs. We had four courses for dinner, and no horseflesh—at least the waiter said not. The room was crowded with French officers. I dined at the same table with Colonel Michel Ney, a nephew of the historical Marshal. He had received some half-dozen sabre-wounds in the cavalry fight at Vionville, and was only half recovered. At the same table also sat General Duplessis, a French officer of distinction, who also has been severely wounded. This evening there was a tremendous rush of Prussian officers into the hotel. Quarters cannot be had now at any price. Forty officers have been sent away from the Hôtel de l'Europe to-night, and I am indebted to a good-hearted American for half his bed. The French and Prussian officers are fraternizing in the *salle* as I write. At first the Frenchmen were a little inclined to be sulky and reserved, but the heartiness of the Prussians soon thawed the ice, and the champagne is promoting the flow of kindly feeling. I am told that this forenoon, when the officers of the Imperial Guard said adieu to their men, profuse tears were shed by both. There was no such emotion manifested by Lebœuf's corps.

The scarcity of bread has caused great suffering, and after that the want most severely felt has been that of salt, the price of which I have already quoted. There are saline springs within the French lines, and the water from these has been selling at 1fr. 50c. per bottle. There has been some inconvenience from lack of water suitable for drinking. The troops have suffered fearfully. For days at a time they have had no bread ration at all served out to them, and have had to live wholly on lean horseflesh. Of these animals over 50,000 have been consumed during the siege. It is a curious fact that folks with so great

a genius for cookery as the French, should have been indebted to the Prussians for a wrinkle in this line, but such is the case. There are still some 600 Prussian prisoners here in the town—taken at intervals during the siege. These fellows, when they got their horseflesh, treated it as they do their own ration meat—chop it up into minced meat with onions and meal, then consolidate it into a block and fry it. This the Prussians called "klopp," and the French "klopp"-ified their horseflesh in imitation of the Prussian tactics. But no device can make palatable the flesh, or rather the sinews, of the miserable screws to which have been reduced most of the horses in Metz. The divisional chaplain of the Guards has just told me that he, the day before yesterday, gave a pound of bread to three captains—all noblemen—of the Imperial Guard, which was the first bread they had tasted for three days.

Yesterday afternoon, when the news of the capitulation was made known, there was a sort of revolutionary riot in Metz. The Garde Nationale made a display of refusing to give up their arms, ran to the Place d'Armes, where they congregated in large numbers, and several shots were fired. The cathedral rang the alarm-bell, and the shops put their shutters up. The mob, composed in a large proportion of civilians, laid hold of an officer of the Imperial Guard, and, holding pistols at his head, forced him to carry in the front the Republican flag. A hint from the mayor that the Prussians would be sent for to put down the disturbance had its effect, after the *gamins* had roared themselves hoarse shouting "Vive la République!" There were also some clamours for Bazaine's life-blood, but the Marshal, with great discretion, remained in his quarters at Ban St. Martin.

It was not until ten days ago that the troops of Bazaine's army were forbidden to enter the town of Metz. Up till

then they circulated freely in the town, using the cafés, and spending their money in the shops. Until six days ago a ration of bread of 100 grammes was issued to each soldier. Since then they have had no rations, except horseflesh. The townspeople have been on bread rations as well as the troops, the ration consisting of 200 grammes of brown bread. Those who are able pay for their ration; the poor have been receiving it gratuitously. It surprises me that Metz has been able to hold out so long. The place has not above 60,000 inhabitants, if so many, and it has supported for seventy days a gross population of 230,000 mouths. These are the official figures. The dearness of provisions has been progressive. For instance, on the 16th of August, butter had already reached the fancy price of 4f. per pound. On the same day chickens ranged from 6f. to 8f. Now butter cannot be procured at any price, and the same may be said of chickens. Metz has certainly not capitulated for want of munitions of war. The fortress has supplies for two years still left. The inside of the ramparts is lined continually with projectiles. At the beginning of the siege there were in store 12,000 projectiles for each gun—at least so I am informed. Although Metz is an arsenal, no manufacture of cannon or projectiles has gone on during the siege. There has been no occasion for any such work, and if there had, the want of coals would have presented an insuperable obstacle. All the coal used in Metz comes from Saarbruck, and there has recently been great scarcity—so much so that an order was issued a week ago that the gas in the town should be extinguished at seven o'clock under a heavy penalty. Candles are plentiful, and the deprivation was therefore not so seriously felt. Powder has, however, been made in large quantities.

There is here a volunteer ambulance for "the Army of the

Rhine," in charge of Dr. Le Fort. It has eight fourgons, four surgeons, twelve aides, and twelve sous-aides. They are located opposite the Prefecture, and have been of immense service to the French army in the field. At Colombey, on the 15th of August, the fourgons were in the Prussian head-quarters during the armistice, and took away seventy wounded officers. Of sick there are altogether about 20,000 soldiers, and about 9,000 wounded. The latter have chiefly been wounded in the sorties. Of the wounded in the battles of Courcelles and Gravelotte most are either recovered or dead. Very many mutilated men are to be seen in the streets. Latterly almost every operation has ended fatally. Pyæmia, hospital gangrene, and typhus have had their sway on frames previously debilitated by hardship and famine. Of hospital stores I cannot learn that there is any serious lack, except in the matter of leeches. For two of these Dr. Ward yesterday paid 180 francs. His colleague was down with brain-fever, and he paid this wildly fancy price to save his life.

I enclose a copy of to-day's *L'Indépendant*, which will enable you to judge of the state of feeling here. The antipathy seems chiefly directed against Bazaine, and also against Coffinière, who was in command of the fortress of Metz. Coffinière's son, by the way, was shot the other day by the Prussians, he having been taken prisoner in a sortie fighting, while under parole. Two or three newspapers continue to be daily printed in Metz. Since no outside information has reached the town for so long, the newspapers have chiefly concerned themselves with local gossip, hopes, fears, and canards. A file of one of them is a curious sight. The stock of paper has run out long since, and the journals have been printed one day on red paper, another on blue, a third on buff, and so on—

advertisement placard paper having necessarily been had resort to. One journal is now printed on brown packing-paper. The siege guns from Metz will, in some part, be used for the reduction of Thionville, which may be expected now very shortly. Others will be used against Verdun.

All this afternoon, since four o'clock, the division of General Kummer has been pouring into the town, with bands playing and colours flying. The great Landwehrmen stared around them with undisguised curiosity at the nut which they have found so hard to crack. The townsfolk jabbered among themselves as the troops defiled, and there were not a few scowling faces. What cared the Landwehrmen for the scowling faces? From the slush and mire of Maizières and Ladonchamps they had come into a reasonable prospect of beds and bottles of wine. They are quartered for the most part in the Caserne du Génie, the Hôtel de Ville, and other public buildings. The officers are in private houses. How they are devoting themselves to champagne in the *salle* of the hotel! Generals, lieutenants, *vice-feldwebels*, all in the lump are here, and one and all speaking, *more Prussico*, at the top of their voices—the din is deafening. The French officers have gone off to bed, all save two, who are sitting moodily in a corner, pulling their moustaches and drinking absinthe—the poison that has sapped the virility of the French army.

This morning I learn that some officious patriot had been busy during the night with the statue of Marshal Fabert in the Place d'Armes here. When capitulation was talked of a few days ago, a wreath of immortelles and laurel was woven round his head, and a flag stuck in his hand. This morning the Marshal appeared draped in a full suit of crape, with a hole in it, through which was visible the

inscription—the words which the gallant Marshal addressed to Louis XIV.:—

> Si pour empêcher qu'une place
> Que le Roi m'a confiée
> Ne tombât au pouvoir de l'ennemi,
> Il fallait mettre à la brêche
> Ma personne, ma famille et tout mon bien,
> Je ne balancerais pas un moment à le faire.

Bazaine, under the circumstances, is, I think, to be excused for not acting up to the programme chalked out by the stanch old Marshal.

Oct. 31.—I was, after all, disappointed in getting off my letter of the 29th yesterday morning. The gates were open all night, and it is only about seven miles to Courcelles. I left my hotel at 6 A.M., in reasonable expectancy of being able to reach Courcelles in time for the train leaving for Saarbruck at 8.15. Retribution fell upon me for giving myself up to Sybaritism for once. I rode inside the carriage instead of outside on the box, and the consequence was that the driver, obeying the natural idiosyncrasy of his species, drifted into the wrong road. I became first aware of this unpleasant fact by the hesitating manner in which he sent his machine along, and in putting the question to the man he owned that he was all abroad. Trying to work as the crow flies, we presently became involved in a labyrinth of entrenchments, stockades, and felled trees, and ultimately came to a dead standstill right in the heart of the wood of Colombey. Further progress now with the vehicle was utterly impossible, and there was nothing for it but to make a bee-line for Courcelles on foot. Although I ran most of the way I did not arrive in time for the regular train, and there was no other passenger or post-train till the afternoon. But I did not do so bad after all. Dropping in upon Baron Kramm at the Lazarette depôt, I found hob-nobbing with this worthy man

the Princes of Reuss and Leuchtenburg. The former was going down to Saarbruck by a prisoner's train, which was leaving at 10 A.M., and he kindly undertook to take my letter and telegram. I trust that "Henry 18th"—the Princes of Reuss, you must know, are all labelled Henry, and numbered consecutively—duly fulfilled the commission which he undertook, and that my communication reached England without any great delay. On my way from Colombey to Courcelles my track lay through the prisoner-bivouac of the Second French Army Corps (Frossard's). It was a very miserable scene. The fires of the previous night had burnt out, and the morning fires had not been lit. The miserable prisoners lounged about in seeming utter despair, the fine rain wetting them through and through, and keeping soft the mud with which their coats were plastered. Some few had erected tents, but the great mass had spent the night in the open, standing round the fires, for to lie down must have been impracticable. If it was any consolation to the prisoners, their Prussian guards were in as miserable a plight as their captives. The chain of sentries posted all round slouched backward and forward on their posts, and the fixed "corporal-schafts" leaned gloomily on their weapons. In the road in front of Ars Laquenexy a kind of market had been established, but the dealers had hardly waked up under the tilts of the carts. They were *marketenders* chiefly from the German frontier about Saarlouis, and the bulk of their wares consisted of spirituous liquor. The French prisoners are by no means short of money. All the cash in the bank here was disbursed in paying the troops up to the middle of this month, and there are plenty of francs in their pockets.

When I was at Courcelles, I saw the arrival of the first column of prisoners to be sent down by the train to

Saarbruck. There were 2,000 of them, and five trains, each containing the same number, are being despatched every day. Poor fellows, they seemed very miserable, but they bore their misery with a fortitude which filled me with respect. The rain poured down upon them in a deluge as they stood in the road, which was a foot deep in mud, of the consistency of pea soup. Here they had to wait for about an hour, while the arrangements for their transit were being completed, and it was good to see the courtesy and quiet fortitude which they manifested. I went among them in the mud. Everywhere the poor fellows stepped aside with a half-bow to let me pass. If one accidentally jostled me, the "Pardon, Monsieur," was prompt and warm. I found these French prisoners here as ignorant as those whom I had seen at Sedan. Some of the sergeants asked me for news of the outer world, but the men seemed chiefly concerned to know whither they were going, and what kind of country Germany was. I named several towns as among their probable destination, leading cities of Germany, but very few had more than heard of them, and knew nothing either of their magnitude or of their locality. At last the train was ready, some sixty carriages packed as closely as the men could sit or stand. Several open trucks had been brought into requisition, and it seemed to me as though the men were actually stacked upon them, so thickly were they packed. With a whistle the heavy train sluggishly set itself in motion, and away it rolled with its freight of Frenchmen down what was once one of the most charming valleys in France. The Frenchmen were prisoners on their way to expatriation, the valley is a wilderness: on the ramparts of St. Quentin, which from a distance overlooked the scene, paced the square-built men with the brass-spiked helmets. The virgin fortress of France,

never till now profaned by the foot of an invader, is held by the Landwehrmen, and the streets of the town echo to the clash of the Prussian subaltern's sword.

The people of Metz seem to me morally stunned. They are not in terror of the Prussian soldiers, while they have sufficient comprehension of the situation not to manifest any animosity which they may feel. The men stalk about the streets, stopping to gaze on the Prussian columns as they tramp past with their brisk quick step, and then resuming the moody walk with a muttered "Mon Dieu." After nightfall yesterday there was a good deal of disorder in the lower parts of the town. The streets still swarm with French prisoners, and they are not by any means careful of the rights of *meum* and *tuum* in fitting themselves out for their pilgrimage into captivity. A woman appealed to me last night to interpose for the prevention of the forcible abduction of her horse by a French under-officer, who, in a state of semi-intoxication, had got on his back and insisted on carrying it off. The Prussian gendarmes patrol the town, interfering as little as they can help, but firm and prompt when they do interfere. The turbulent prisoner very soon found himself no longer an equestrian.

As I drove out yesterday morning across the glacis of Fort Belle Croix, I was struck by the alteration which had taken place there since the previous day. Then the whole expanse swarmed with life. Cavalrymen, artillerymen, infantrymen, were blended in chaotic confusion, out of which it seemed impossible to evolve order. Now the expanse lay blank and bare. Cavalrymen, artillerymen, infantrymen, had been drafted off it. Nothing was left but the mud and a few horses, too debilitated to be removed, and dropping, even as I passed, into the slush out of which they should never rise. There was, by the way, a horse-market in Metz

yesterday, or rather just outside the gate. I imagine a good many horses changed hands to which the parties who disposed of them would have had some difficulty in proving a valid title. Prices ranged from a franc and a half up to five pounds, but this latter was a fancy price, and only given for an officer's charger of breeding and substance. After seeing the prisoners' trains leave Courcelles, I drove away northward, my coachman having come drifting down to the station two hours after my arrival; and after visiting the head-quarter Staff of the Seventh Army Corps at Puche, and my friends of the 4th Regiment at Retonfay, went into the lager of Lebœuf's corps on the slope between Château-Gras and Retonfay. It was getting towards evening by this time, and I was in the right time for seeing the Frenchmen making their preparations for bivouac. What splendid fellows they are, to be sure, at this kind of work! Already the tents had had a drain through each to carry off the surface water. The great poplar trees on the *chaussée*—those that the Prussians had left standing—were falling fast. Those that the Prussians had felled the Frenchmen were chopping up into lengths, and carrying off to the bivouac fire. Others stood round the bivouac fires or lay on curious improvised beds, contrived with dexterously-placed stones to keep their constructors out of the mud. In the blaze of the fires were pots and saucepans. Rather than part from a saucepan when he has once secured it, I believe a French soldier would lose one of his boots. The pots and saucepans were simmering merrily, and emitting a fragrant odour; whence it was derived I could not guess. The rations had been meat and biscuit; nothing else save salt. The men had dug up again the already thrice-turned-over potato fields, and might have got a few tubers. But potatoes, and meat, and biscuits are impotent to create the pleasant

odour. There was a flavour of onions in the scent, and a *soupçon* of garlic, and a gamey whiff besides that made one's mouth water. Perhaps the latter was attributable to the horse, of which I saw several prisoners carrying out from their Metz bivouacs large portions.

The atmosphere is full of stories of the prices paid in Metz during the siege for articles of food. Most of these are to be taken *cum grano*, since the beleaguered, now that it is all over, not unnaturally take a pleasure in piling up the agony. But the one which I am going to narrate I have from an undeniable source, and I give it as illustrative of the profligate frivolity among the wealthier and more aristocratic officers which has been one of the chief causes of the ruin of the French army. There has been here during the siege a certain lady of the Parisian *demi-monde*, who came to Metz when the Emperor came, and could not get away when he retired *viâ* Verdun to Châlons. Two officers of the Garde Impérial have been rivals for this lady's affections. The lady, it seems, has a fanciful and delicate appetite, and one day in the early part of the present month she expressed a fervent wish to be regaled on turkey and truffles. "Ah, you know that is an impossibility," was the rejoinder of one of the swains. "I don't know that," said the other, eager for an opening; "I shall try what I can do." The other, in his jealousy, offered to bet 500 francs that he would not succeed, and the wager was accepted. The officer came to the landlord of one of the hotels and gave him the commission, adding that money was no object. The head-waiter went on a foraging expedition, and after two days' search brought the officer a turkey and truffles, with a little bill for a thousand francs; so the gay guardsman won his bet and lost 500 francs.

As I was driving out to Courcelles this morning my coachman quietly told me that his wife and three children

were starving. When we returned at night I went with him to ascertain the circumstances for myself. He guided me into a part of the town close to the middle branch of the Moselle, inhabited only by the poorest of the poor. I had before then only been on the top of the crust which overlies the misery caused by this siege. I had dined and eaten dessert; I had called for wine, and so it was forthcoming. So far as concerned the hotels, the world seemed to wag very much as usual. I saw no ghastly faces in the streets, pallid with want, as were the faces of those citizens of Antwerp who cheered the lean Stadtholder when he swore to eat his boots before he would surrender. But it was not because there are no pale faces and attenuated forms in Metz that I did not see them in the streets, but because the miserable ones care not to make a parade of their misery. It was a sorry sight the squalid room of the coachman presented. Of bread the family had not had a morsel for three days, then they had received as ration two pounds for six. One of the six, an infant two years old, wants rations no more. The little body lay on two planks under the window, the victim of bodily exhaustion, from deficient and improper food. How can a child of two years survive on sinewy horseflesh, in scanty quantity, and on a casual morsel of bread, the meal of which is mixed with sawdust and chopped straw to make it eke out? All up and down the poverty-stricken street the wretchedness was much the same. Horseflesh and want of salt had killed off the children like flies. The mortality among the little ones has been frightful. The elder children are covered with blotches and scorbutic sores, caused by want of salt and of variety in their food. As regards the inhabitants of Metz itself, the misery will soon come to an end. There is no want of wealth in Metz, and the rich citizens are

public-spirited. Now that food can be bought, it will be bought and distributed freely. But let me once again call attention to the wretchedness—a wretchedness almost without hope—of the villagers inhabiting the country around Metz. They have nothing—not even a roof above them, in this pitiless rain. Of their cottages nought stand but the bare walls, often pounded with shells. Their gardens are waste, their cattle are gone, their furniture is wrecked, their straw is dung, their fields are fallow and studded with graves. Seed-corn! What boots it to talk of seed-corn when the food for to-day is not? By the end of this week every village will be a nest of typhus fever. By the time that the winter is over, if something is not done, there will not be many left to catch typhus or any other fever.

The French officers are in great force in Metz; but there are many who have declined the offer of parole, and are going to Germany as prisoners with their troops. The reason which they allege for refusing the proffered indulgence is, that their civilian countrymen do not understand the system, and if they should return to their homes, and, in obedience to their promise, refuse again to take up arms, they would be branded as cowards, and indeed seem to apprehend that a worse thing might befall them. I saw General Coffinière in the Hôtel de l'Europe this morning—a truly aldermanic-looking elderly man, with a grey moustache and a heavy jowl. The Metz paper, *L'Indépendant*—a copy of which I sent you on the 29th—has been suppressed by the Prussian authorities. The copy I sent you was the last issued. This morning the tone of the Metz press is extremely guarded, and no more of the journals will be interfered with so long as they behave themselves.

The army is highly gratified by the fact that the King has raised Prince Frederick Carl to the rank of a Field

Marshal. He comes into the town this afternoon, entering quietly through the Porte Sarpenoise, and then going first to visit the fortifications of the Porte Chambrère and the Polygon, and then riding out to Fort St. Julien. A goodly proportion of his Staff have already come clattering into the Hôtel de l'Europe—princes, counts and "vons," in all the varieties of swell cavalry uniforms. The Prince goes to-day or to-morrow for a few days' change, his health being far from restored after his attack of dysentery. Some of his Staff go with him, but the administration of the Second Army remains at Corny. The Seventh Army Corps remains in the meantime in the vicinity of Metz, as well as Kummer's division inside. General Manteuffel yesterday quitted Ste. Barbe for Jouy, and assumed the command of the First Army, commanded in the early part of the war by that excellent officer General Steinmetz, who has been much maligned. This First Army, under his command, marches in a few days in the direction of Lille; the Second Army, remaining under Prince Frederick Charles, will proceed later towards Besançon. The prisoners from the western side of the Moselle are being drafted across the river daily into the camps on this side nearest to Courcelles, so that the latter, although being depleted daily, will be kept at their present strength till all have been brought across.

Accounts of an affair which took place in the neighbourhood of Mercy-le-Haut, on Monday last, have, it is understood, been transmitted to England, of a tenor calculated to give an erroneous idea of what really occurred. Under a flag of truce, a column of peasants came out from the vicinity of Metz, and it is understood representations have been made that the women and children were deliberately fired upon by the soldiers of a regiment of the Seventh Army Corps, under orders from a superior officer. I have been officially requested

to explain the facts of the case, and I give them as officially communicated to me. The column of peasants did make its appearance under a flag of truce and in great strength. As starvation was the weapon on which the Prussians were relying, it would have been in the teeth of their policy to allow of this exodus, which would *pro tanto* weaken this weapon. The poor people, therefore, were ordered to fall back and return. They disobeyed the orders, and continued to advance. The troops fell back before them in utter bewilderment as to the means of stopping them, while a message was sent for instructions. These were to the effect that shots should be fired to intimidate the people, care being taken to aim wide. Even this had no effect. A male peasant was in the front with a flag of truce in his hand, and waving on his convoy. He was repeatedly warned of the risk he ran, but the man appeared to be drunk, and refused to relinquish his purpose. Hard on his heels followed a woman maddened with drink, who also brandished a white flag, and yelled to those behind her to come on. When all other efforts had been tried, and failed, a shot was fired at the leader, who fell wounded, and his following then turned about and made their return towards Metz unmolested. This I am told is the unvarnished tale.

Yesterday a convoy of 300 generals and superior officers went off at five o'clock. To-day, at 10.30, a train left for Mayence, *viâ* Nancy, for the accommodation of generals and Chief Staff officers. To-morrow a regular series of trains will start for Saarbruck, containing officers. The first, leaving at 9.30, accommodates the officers of the garrison; the second at 1.30, for the officers of the Imperial Guard, cavalry of the reserve, and Engineers. At 1.30, the officers of Canrobert's corps (the 6th), and division of Forton. At 4.15 a train takes off the officers

of the 2nd Corps (Frossard's), and the Brigade Lapasset; and at 6.15 the 3rd Corps (Lebœuf's). Great consideration is being shown by the Prussian authorities for the officers, and careful arrangements are being made for the wounded and sick French, chiefly under the supervision of Prussian doctors.

His Excellency von Kummer has had to give the Metz people a caution in his own grim way. When the first of the Prussian troops came in on the 28th, some of the hotter-blooded civilians fell upon them with knives, and wounded one or two, who were brought down to one of the ambulances, where I saw their wounds dressed. General Kummer has posted a proclamation informing the inhabitants that death will inevitably be the portion of any one who lifts his hand against a Prussian soldier, or who steals anything from him, harbours a spy, or does anything contrary to the interests of the Prussian army. At the same time, he announces that scrupulous regard will be paid to private property in the town and vicinity, and to enforce orders patrols of gendarmes are pacing the streets. I may give you the exact official number of efficients in the besieging army—168,000. The prisoners, as I have already stated, number 173,000.

I have spent this afternoon in inspecting, so far as is in my power, the fortifications of the town of Metz, and those constituting its exterior defences. What I have already written in the columns of the *Daily News* concerning the natural and artificial strength of the forts of St. Quentin, St. Julien, Plappeville, St. Eloy, and Queleu has been more than borne out by personal investigation. Whoever holds Metz holds an impregnable fortress. Nothing can so much as get at the fortress of Metz proper while the outworks hold out, and there is no reason that, properly garrisoned and provisioned, they should not hold out for ever. It might be possible to batter down St. Eloy or

Queleu; the others cannot be got at advantageously in any way on account of the strength of their natural position. The weak point of the fortress is towards the east, between Queleu and St. Julien; but the complement of the defence on that side is made up by the "provisional" earthwork of Les Bottes. From what I hear, I think it probable that the day after the 14th of August, the Prussians, if they had made a dash, and had been prepared for severe losses, might have effected a lodgment in front of Fort Belle Croix in this direction, and, indeed, if all tales are true, might have pushed their way into the town itself. We all know how easy it is to be wise after the event. The English army in the Crimea was abused for not going straight into Sebastopol two days after the Alma, instead of sitting down on that bleak plateau over against the fortress. Had its leaders known the state of the fortifications, no doubt that weary winter and those heaps of dead might have been spared to Britain. So with the Prussians here. I am assured that so confident were the French of success—so ridiculous did they think the idea that it was possible to invest Metz—that it was not till after the battle of Forbach that serious efforts were made to place the fortress in an efficient state of defence. The guns were not mounted till then behind the embrasures. Les Bottes was unfinished—a mere heap of shapeless earth. Even now it is not properly finished, and is as slovenly a piece of fortification work as I ever saw put out of hand by troops which assert they have engineers in their ranks. Nevertheless, it has a front, and guns mounted on that front. The Prussians, ever masterful and prompt, will not delay long to alter Les Bottes from a "provisional" into a permanent fort; and, with their efficient and thorough system of administration, Metz, if impregnable hitherto, will be henceforth, if such a thing can be, doubly impregnable.

From what I can learn, there has been a good deal more of huckstering than patriotism among the civilian population of Metz. There was a reason for the *émeute* on the evening of the 28th. The wily burghers had been keeping back their stores for a market, while their poorer fellows hungered because of the high prices, and the army starved. Horses were dying daily for the want of forage; yet the Prussians have found stores of hay and corn quietly stowed away in unlikely places. It is the same with other articles of consumption, and the administration does not seem to have been either strong enough or cunning enough to make everything forthcoming for the common good. Napoleon called us a nation of shopkeepers, but I take leave to doubt whether our shopkeeping idiosyncrasy would have developed itself in such a manner. I cannot help having a quiet chuckle at the *doux* burghers, whose market Bazaine has spoiled. Ye gods, how they hate him for it! From the newspapers I have already sent you, and the one I now enclose, you may be able to judge how venomously this feeling manifests itself. If you listen to all you hear, you must accept the conclusion that Bazaine is a renegade and traitor of the largest possible calibre. It seems, according to the gossip of the natives, savage that their canny little scheme for putting money in their purses has failed, that Bazaine nourished the design of having himself declared Regent of France, and that he only relinquished this ambitious project for the consideration of a fabulous subsidy, contributed I cannot exactly learn by whom. It is useless to point out to the angry and disappointed cits that on the face of it this is rubbish, and that Bazaine kept his upper lip straight and his face to the foe so long as, and indeed longer, than he had an army capable of fighting, marching, or standing up to be shot down. When the history of this

war comes to be written, the name of Bazaine will have to be inscribed in brighter ink than that of any other French commander. If he had had subordinates capable of co-operating with him, had he been unfettered at the outset, and had the discipline and *morale* of his army not been deteriorated before he took the command of it, it might have been that the chroniclers of this war would have had a different tale to tell.

It was with a deep interest that I listened at the *table d'hôte* this evening to the despondent remarks of a venerable French gentleman, who had been a colonel at Waterloo. The old man had the water in his eyes as he spoke of the depreciation in the character of the forces of his country. The cause that has wrought the curse of deteriorated discipline is, according to him, the pernicious itch for popularity with which all the French superior officers are bitten. Canrobert, he told me, was the great initiator of this popularity-hunting fever. In his rough, bluff way he used familiarly to appeal to the private soldiers as "his children," whether their rations were what they liked, and if an ill-conditioned fellow, thus encouraged, vented a grumble, he would turn on the colonel and blow him up sky-high. One very pregnant observation he made, a remark which I have thought of all the evening, and doubly significant as coming from a Frenchman and an officer. "Surely," said I, "this will bring the French to their senses, and we must have peace in a very short time. And just as surely that peace," I continued, "must be a permanent one, for the French army, with all its craving for *la gloire*, must realize the fact that there is not much in the way of *la gloire* to be got by being greedy for the Rhine."

"I don't know," said the old man, mournfully. "Logically you are right, no doubt; but severe as the lesson has been, I question of its effect. It is the officers of

the French army who chiefly are the clamourers—senseless and frothy clamourers—after *la gloire*. They shrieked for war, enervated with lust and absinthe as they were, ignorant of their duties, their minds uncultivated, and debilitated with luxury. I fear they are too far gone, too utterly vitiated and emasculated mentally, to be able to draw the conclusion from the premises; and I should not be surprised if, a year hence, you may hear the parole loafers who are swinging about the streets to-day yelling for war again, as unprepared to pursue it to success as they were when this one was entered into, and as reckless and regardless of consequences as they were then and are now."

Just conceive what France must have come to when one of her *anciens militaires* can speak thus! That the officers of his army are, in his opinion, so utterly spineless as to be unable to recognize the fact that they are beaten, the causes which have led to their defeat, and the utter impossibility that unless they purge and live cleanly they can make even a fair fight of it against the cool-headed and heavy-handed German! The whirligig of time brings round many curious changes, but it is utterly outside the nature of things that Frenchmen as they are, as I see them from day to day, can ever, given what advantages they may, be a match in warfare for a people so constituted as those which dwell in the Vaterland. The hot iron of adversity brands deep, and has a wonderful power to cure ailments, but if the surface is so callous that the iron will not mark, how can the beneficial result be achieved? The old gentleman was specially severe on the Zouaves. When these regiments were first constituted, he said the ranks were really full of fighting men. No one who saw the Zouaves in the Crimea but must endorse this opinion. But as their fame grew they became fashion-

able, and then their ruin set in. The ranks were crowded with young sprigs who had no other thought than a picturesque uniform, waxed moustaches, the demi-monde, and absinthe, and the once stout and capable regiments lost their prowess and became enervated and flaccid. This view may be exaggerated—the *ancien militaire* of the *table d'hôte* was not the first man that ever put forth the opinion that "the service is going to the dogs, by gad!" but it is in a measure confirmed by the events of this war, in which the French infantry of the line has displayed far greater valour and patient endurance than the pet regiments.

The English ambulance, I am happy to state, has reached Metz with promptitude and in a most efficient condition. Five fourgons came in on the 29th, five more yesterday. Since their advent the officials have been assiduously engaged in distributing their stores amongst the lazarettes. The gentlemen of the English Ambulance were the first to bring salt to the several hospitals. The chief lack has been in opium, quinine, and surgical instruments. How far the latter want has existed I cannot personally state, not being a medical man, but a surgeon of the International Ambulance asserted yerterday, in my hearing, that he had repeatedly performed operations with a bistoury. I never doubt any gentleman's word, but to cut off a leg with a bistoury seems to be something like blowing up a mountain with a penny cracker.

I have the *carte* of a supper which an officer gave at the Hôtel de l'Europe last week, on the occasion of his receiving a decoration. For a fortress on the eve of surrendering by reason of famine, it must be owned that both the eating and drinking were far from despicable. To quote may amuse your readers. Here it is—Soup à la Julienne, pille, roast beef, roast chicken and salad, horsebrains and cauliflower, hare: dessert,

preserves, bon-bons, Rhine wine, château de Pape, champagne, cognac, tea, coffee, Maraschino, cigars.

November 1.—One is surprised, on entering Metz for the first time since the capitulation, how little sickness is apparently existing in the town. One strolls on to the Place Royale, and there he sees the streets of railway waggons, which in the early days were brought into the town from the station—300 of them—and diverted from the carriage of luggage or merchandise to be hospitals for the reception of the sick and wounded. The waggons are there still, it is true, but of sick and wounded there seem very few. Here and there a convalescent limps about on crutches, or a pallid-faced man glides past, from whom you instinctively shrink with a curious feeling that the taint of the fever must be hanging about him still. But of sweeping pestilence there are no traces. One has to look for the deadly sickness in quiet corners in the little impoverished hospitals, where there are only a few cases, or in the neglected villages around the town, where hygiene has been comparatively neglected. There it is, and there alone, where you will find forms which you are told are those of men, but passed out of all recognition as such, discoloured and bloated in the last stages of the foul black small-pox. It may be that you chance on a lazarette into which the terrible demon of hospital gangrene has entered and fixed his relentless fang, never to be withdrawn till the earth has been heaped on his victim. A few cases of this terrible disorder, and only a few, have I seen. I trust no reader of the *Daily News* will ever be called to look upon the corpse of one who has died of pyæmia. One takes his life in his hand when he goes among such spectacles. Here is a house in the Isle de Saulny in which there are five sick men and two corpses. There is a doctor with them—a lone man, for the very women, with their tender hearts steeled

by the terror of the dread infection, have run away. The doctor is an American, a mere youth in years, but there is a grey already in his hair, and he tells me that the last six weeks have made him feel as an old man. With every breath he inhales he risks his life nearly as much as if he held his fist into the cage of a cobra capella. What words can describe the colour of these semicomatose forms which he handles so tenderly? Have they been blown up in explosions, and had their skins dusted over to ease the smart of the burn, and to hide the swarthy brand of the powder? No, they are the victims of a far worse misfortune. They lie smitten to the marrow with the terrible *Typhus exanthematicus*, the floury typhus, which is happily so rare that many a respectable and capable general practitioner in Britain has never heard of it. The flour which the exanthematicus powders on the skin of its victim seldom washes off. Almost invariably face and flour-dust are alike hidden in the grave.

The railway station outside the Porte Serpentoise of Metz is a curious sight. It is the depôt of all the vast train of that Corps-Francs organized by the Chemin de Fer de l'Est, with a military constitution, and having a material that cost fifteen millions of francs. The corps numbered 1,200 men, and they, with all their material, their bridges, their stalls, their waggons, their pontoons, and their vast limber blocks, were destined to act as the pioneers of the French army on its march "à Berlin," and to repair the damage to the communications wrought by the Prussians, falling back beaten and demoralized across the Rhine to their capital. There is a bridge here in pieces, specially constructed to be thrown across the Rhine. The bridge has never quitted the locality where it was constructed. It is the prize of the army that has only kept the watch fast and true on the German Rhine, but that stands sen-

try on the Moselle, the Marne, the Seine, and the Loire. And to-day, in the drizzle of the small rain, the bold Corps-Francs are slowly jogging it on the "gefangenzug" towards the Rhine, which they had thought to approach in array so different.

Many a day it will take Metz to recover from the handiwork of the men who undertook to defend it. The tourist who in the early summer came to this virgin queen of the Moselle, might have noticed outside the fortifications a belt of buildings about half an English mile in breadth. The trim villas of the wealthy citizens stood here in the dainty gardens; the pretentious house of the Mayor was here behind its red-brick walls. There were snug little cottages *ornées*, where dwelt ladies about whose antecedents few knew anything, but who had fair faces, and who dressed magnificently. Not one stone remains upon another of all the villas, the mansions, the cottages. All is blank desolation. Here and there the stump of a fountain, erstwhile standing in a pretty garden, asserts itself disconsolately, its one superincumbent Cupid or Neptune half-battered into the mud. The ground is churned into slush by the tread of many footsteps, and fœtid odours blow over it from the dead horses that are rotting on its surface. This belt of desolation is the *zone militaire* of Metz—the space outside the fortifications, where buildings were allowed to be erected solely on the condition that if it should be necessary at any time for military exigencies to destroy them, the owners should not be entitled to claim compensation. The military exigency came in July last, and now the portly Mayor may bite his thumb, and the owners of the villas and the cottages grope about the ruins for salvage, for no consolation is forthcoming for them in the shape of compensation.

On the south side of Metz all the country is inundated by

the overflow of the Moselle. One requires to come out along the railway or by the road to Courcelles to obtain some idea of the strength of Fort Queleu. I had thought it previously a fortification much resembling in its natural features the Fort of St. Eloy. It looks to the observer of it from the east or south-east as if it stood on a flat. Looking at it from the west, however, one sees that it crowns the summit of a blunt eminence that rises out of a branch of the Moselle, and that on this side it has at once a natural glacis and a natural moat. Immediately outside the *zone militaire* there is a chain of villages which have suffered very little externally, and in which the children play and the women spin. Beyond this again you come upon the wrecks. To the south, for instance, is Peltre, not a house of which has a roof upon it. This was the handiwork of the French themselves. As I drove past it in the dull half-light of the morning, the roofless church stood out through the watery fog, the tracery of its gothic windows making a ghastly cobweb across the sky.

By the train which left Metz this morning, Marshals Canrobert and Lebœuf went off into Germany. The telegraph-wires will be re-established to Metz this afternoon, and I understand that the office will, from to-day, be open for private as well as official telegrams. The day before yesterday the post was established on a regular footing, and it was a sight to see the crowds who surged around it eager to send letters off to their friends, with whom they have had no communication for so many weeks. I am told that about 30,000 prisoners crossed the Moselle yesterday to the north of Metz, on their way on foot to Saarlouis. The weather is still abominable, and the camps are terribly trying for the prisoners. But they are better off than they were before the capitulation. They receive the same rations that the Prussian sol-

diers do, and receive them regularly and punctually. This is what they have not been accustomed to for many a day.

Nov. 2.—Yesterday I continued my investigations as to the condition of the French sick, who have been left by the capitulation as a legacy to the Prussians. In these inquiries I have to acknowledge having derived great assistance from the courteous kindness of Dr. Leithold, of the division of General Kummer, on whom has devolved the supervision of all the medical and sanitary arrangements. Dr. Leithold has in all inherited about 19,000 sick men, among whom are included only sixty Prussian prisoners—all the rest are Frenchmen. This includes the sick in the field hospitals and the various forts. The diseases chiefly raging are typhus and dysentery, the latter with a strong tendency to assume the phase of the former. There are not many cases, however, of spotted or floury typhus. Small-pox is far from rare, and in not a few cases it is of the most virulent form. A good deal of scurvy is also existing. I fancy that a great quantity of scurvy cases of a mild type have not been allowed to enter the hospitals, for of the prisoners in the "Lazer" by Retonfay I have seen a considerable number bearing the evidences of suffering from this disease. With the good and varied rations now being distributed, a disease which has been superinduced by their absence will soon disappear. The hospital stores of which, as Dr. Leithold tells me, there is now most want in Metz, are febrifugal drugs, tonics, especially quinine, and disinfectants. In order at once to clear for the occupation of troops the barracks in Metz, hitherto used as hospitals, and to provide a change into higher and purer air, all the sick who are able to move are being sent out into the high-lying forts surrounding the town. This step, it is hoped, will stimulate healthy action in systems that have become low, degenerate, and stagnant. Good nourishment, which is

being provided with a lavish hand, will co-operate greatly in the setting-up of this healthy action. His Excellency Von Kummer deserves to be held in honour by all humanity for the prompt and solicitous arrangements which he caused to be instituted for relieving the pressure on the sick of the ante-capitulation condition of things. A great bakery of white bread was at once set up in the Caserne des Chasseurs, and orders were circulated that all medical officers in charge of lazarettos should have *carte blanche* to make requisitions for bread. Stores were hurried in of coffee, chocolate, soup, extract and other comforts, and by Sunday morning there were very few sick who were not the better for the advent of the Prussians. Prior to the establishment of the regular system of supply, the Berliner Hülfsverein, represented by MM. Adolph Schwabe and E. Minlos, was the first to commence a distribution of comforts. I understand there is what in the circumstances I take leave to call an unworthy and trumpery feeling of jealousy on the part of some representatives of the different voluntary organizations, and it seems the credit of having been "first in" is claimed very freely, and with no very scrupulous regard to facts, by all and sundry without exception. This is not the only twopenny-halfpenny feeling that intervenes to prevent the harmonious working together of all the organizations which the charity of nations has been so frank and liberal to promote. I have heard of the chief of an ambulance—I do not wish to be personal, and therefore I reserve the name—who abused the representative of the ambulance in Remilly, because, recognizing the imminent urgency of the position, he had come into Metz the moment he could, and with what fourgons he had, instead of waiting for the arrival of additional carriages and stores from the rear. The view of the chief was, that this hurried action of the subordinate pre-

vented the possibility of instituting a pompous procession, which could not have failed to have had an imposing effect at once on the Prussian troops and the inhabitants of Metz. I wonder whether the subscribers intended their money to be applied towards imposing processions, or towards relieving the sick at the earliest opportunity? But since the question of precedence has arisen, it may be as well that it should be decided, and I am in a position to do so. The Berliner Hülfsverein was the first in Metz. Its almoners and carriages came in with the Staff of General Kummer, and before he came in there was no admission for any but exceptionally favoured individuals. I have not learned that any civilian, except myself, got into Metz before late in the afternoon of the 29th. Britons may be glad to know that they, too, helped towards the Liebesgaben, with which were packed the fourgons of the Berliner Hülfsverein, since the British National Society helped its funds with a donation of £1,000, the administration of which was confided to Mr. Schwabe. As General Kummer and his Staff came through the town a scene occurred, pathetic enough in one aspect to move the deepest sympathies of those who love the Fatherland and its children, and yet not without a certain grotesqueness that only affords another illustration of the narrow gap which exists between tears and laughter. As the General rode down the Rue de la Prison Militaire, he passed the prison of the Maison d'Arrêt, where the Prussian prisoners taken on the 7th at Maizières were confined. As the Landwehrmen on that day had met the foe with shouts "Hurrah Preussen!" and "Immer vorwärts!" so now, gaunt, hollowed-eyed, and squalid, the great gallant fellows cheered their countrymen as they came on. The cheer was hardly so full-volumed as when it echoed through the gables of Ladonchamps; scanty rations,

exclusively of horseflesh, are not quite the class of feeding off which to cheer lustily. But Kummer, not unfamiliar with the cheers of his Landwehrmen, heard the "Hurrah Preussen!" from behind the bars, and, halting, called out to his "Kinder" to know how they fared. The hungry men told their plight, and the General, turning to the Intendateur who rode behind him, asked when he could have food up for the wants of the prisoned Landwehrmen. "Not for an hour at least," was the reply. Then Kummer applied to Mr. Schwabe, the bearer of the Liebesgaben, and asked whether he could do nothing till the Intendateur got up his column. The fourgons of the Berliner Hülfsverein were not a furlong behind, and they came up at the trot. The bread tumbled out of the waggons, and in at the prison-windows. But the waggons contained other provender than bread, and the question was asked of the prisoners as they munched their bread, what "Kitchen" they would have to it. Who that knows the Prussian palate but can anticipate the reply. "Haben sie wurst?" was the response, as if from one man, and then from behind came a piping voice —it must have been an epicurean boy who spoke—"Oder Schinken?" Wurst is the German sausage, suggestive to the British mind of trichinæ, and other nameless horrors, but dearer to the Prussian heart than any other edible. Then they got cigars—the prisoners—and Kummer and the Berliner Hülfsverein passed on, the former to take the command of the city, the latter to distribute their arrowroot, tea, woollen garments, winter beds, biscuits, and what not of Liebesgaben, to the wretched French sick.

On returning to the Hôtel de l'Europe, after a round of the hospitals, I found in the *salle* an officer from Retonfay, who had ridden in to tell me that the General in command of the brigade had sent to desire me to call upon

him. I like calling on generals very well if I go of my own accord, but a summons to attend is apt to make one nervous. Had I been writing of the positions without sufficient discretion; I anxiously asked of myself? or had any order been issued to forbid correspondents from frequenting the foreposts? Speculation was useless, and I went straight out in the moonlight to the château inhabited by the General, in the outskirts of Retonfay. There was no frown on the features of the gallant old Pole; my portion was a warm grip of the hand, and a cordial salutation. The General, instead of having a wigging for me, wished to ask a favour of the *Daily News*. The General's children are half English, his wife is an English lady, and his mother-in-law, who, to judge from the enthusiastic manner in which the General spoke of her, is utterly unlike mothers-in-law in general, had thoughtfully sent her fighting son-in-law a box of concentrated soups all the way from a western suburb of London. The gift had moved the General to tender thanks, if he might, through the columns of the *Daily News*, and to make of the box of soups a peg on which to hang a compliment to the British nation. The General pondered, as he ate his soup, on the form which this communication should take, apologizing to me for his silence from the circumstance that he desired "to make a little wit." When he had got to the salad, he found the spirit move him, and he dictated as follows:—"I thank you, dear grandmamma, for your delicious soups; the vermicelli and the tail ox are delicious. The North German Ambassador has made a mistake when he said that the English nation has only manifested a warm-heartedness towards the French. As I eat my dinner I am a witness to the contrary.—Your loving son, Von Zglinitzki, Major-General." The good General slightly distorts, you will observe, the relation existing between

him and the relative he desires to address; but I suppose he has taken the word from the children. Anyhow, as the only representative of the *Daily News* on the foreposts, I made a copy of the General's epistle of thanks, and by his desire have embodied it in my letter.

After leaving him I rode across country to Courcelles to see how my good friend the Baron von Kramm was getting on with his depôt of love-gifts from the Fatherland, now that Metz is taken; and that he may quit the post to which, in the midst of every discomfort, he has clung so stanchly for three months. The Baron is going to transfer his depôt into Metz, and then he goes home. I hope not without the Iron Cross upon his breast, for no man deserves it more. It was midnight ere, in his pleasant society, it occurred to me it was time to go back to Metz. Looking out of window to see what sort of night it was, I noticed a train standing at the station. A train to Metz at midnight! How could this be? I must go and ask. As I came up through the mire, among the *marketender* stalls, I encountered a hungry rush, and stood aside to let it pass. It did not pass, it fell upon the *marketenders* and figuratively swamped them. As it broke and crumbled, I recognized among the waifs it had left an English M.P. not unknown as an able speaker from the Liberal benches, and also as an author whose latest work gained high praise from the reviewers. He was the master of a vast hunk of dry brown bread, which he was swallowing with greater assiduity than ever he devoured a blue-book. Had the Kitchen Committee seen him during the dull interregnum of the dinner-hour how they would have laughed! That train had left Saarbruck at six, and had been at Courcelles close on two hours. It only just became known as I came to the station that food of a kind could be procured, and the rush I had seen was the conse-

quence. I accompanied my compatriot to Metz, leaving my servant to bring on my horse in the morning. When we reached the Metz station we thought we should have to remain in it till morning. It was one vast prison bivouac of Frenchmen, many of whom were sick. They littered the platform and the rails so that one could not move without treading on them, sleeping in all manner of grotesque attitudes. And the whiffs of typhus that rose from the squalid forms in some places made me thankful that I had a cigar in my mouth. I have an opportunity of sending this letter off at once by the prisoners' train, and so I must close.

Nov. 3.—Marshal Bazaine went off the other day to Nancy, and thence by train to Germany. He was in Nancy on Sunday, and required an escort of Prussian cavalry to save him from the violence of the mob. Had they dared, the good folks of Metz would have lynched him rather than let him go. You already know that they insulted him at the station on his departure. They followed his *cortége* to the station, and when they were asked what they wanted, they, with a fierce yell of hate, cried—"Nous sommes venus ici pour cracher à la figure de Bazaine." This was not the only overt evidence of the deadly hate which the populace of Metz bore to the Marshal. The morning after I entered I noticed more than one dead wall scratched in chalk with the words—"Bazaine and Coffinière traitors and cowards."

Yesterday the whole of the 10th Army Corps defiled through Metz on its southward march towards Troyes. Its General, Voigts Rhetz, sat in the saddle in the Place Royale, with Kummer beside him, and a background formed of the trucks devoted to hospital purposes. On the other side of the broad thoroughfare stood groups of French officers looking on critically as the men went past with whom they had so often been

engaged. To have seen the different regiments pass the saluting-point, with everything about them as neat as if they had come out of barracks, you would never have thought they could have been doing forepost work and fighting for six weeks. Fresh, stout, clean, and supple, the great stalwart fellows came past with the Prussian quick-step in one long continuous stream for two hours, and long before all had passed the Frenchmen had sunk into a dull silence that seemed to betoken acquiescence in an inevitable fate. There was no cheering or singing, the bands played as they passed the General, but the Prussian does not insult a fallen foe, and the "Wacht am Rhein" was kept for the country roads. General Kummer, during his brief tenure of a very difficult and delicate office, has earned a well-deserved popularity. His urbanity and consideration to the French officers have been appreciated warmly by them all, and not a few of them have referred to the subject in my hearing with deep feeling. It may not be generally known that when the report of the capitulation became spread abroad throughout the army on the evening of the 28th ult., a great number of regimental officers had a sort of *caucus* meeting, in which they discussed the matter. Universal indignation at the conduct of Bazaine was expressed, and it having been estimated that the officers present were able to rely on the fidelity of a following of some 25,000 men, it was resolved that a desperate effort should be made that same night to cut a way through the Prussian lines. The meeting separated, and one of its members came to the Hôtel de l'Europe, where, over a bottle of champagne, he made his last will and testament, and, with a tear in his eye, committed it to his friend my informant, and went forth with set teeth on his desperate enterprise. Next morning he came back to breakfast, blithe as a bird, and reclaimed his will. It

seemed there had been a miscalculation. Instead of the following of 25,000 men on which the officers had relied, they could not get a man to follow them. The realization of the misconception prevented the attempt being made.

With the exercise of not little diplomacy I have to-day obtained what I reckon one of the most interesting souvenirs of this war, in the shape of files of the Metz journals *L'Indépendant* and *Le Vœu National* for the months of August, September, and October. These are great curiosities, were it only for the divers colours of the papers on which they are printed. I forward them by this post. The editor of *L'Indépendant*, who, I may remark, was so great a regarder of the *camaraderie* of the press as to insist on my acceptance of his file as a present, although he had refused the day before to sell it at any price, is an ultra-patriot, and therefore I accepted what he told me with a considerable grain of salt. On questions of fact, however, I had no right to doubt his word. Coffinière, he told me, exercised a most rigid censorship over the press, and cut out uniformly for a month before the capitulation every article calculated to give offence to the Prussians, or of a tenor to fan the flame of resistance. The editor also asserts that there was food enough in Metz to support the population for a considerable time longer, and that as a proof that the troops need not have been at starvation point, the forts were full of provisions. Of this latter fact there can be no doubt. I have myself inspected the provision stores in Fort St. Quentin, and found them capable of maintaining a garrison adequate for the defence of the fort for months at least. But I don't see that any deduction is to be drawn from this that Bazaine has played false to his trust. His policy is explicable enough, viewed in a military light. His cue evidently from the first has

been to keep the fortress so as to be able to maintain its resistance. He has made effort after effort to get his army out, and his penultimate proffer to Prince Frederick Charles was to surrender the army and allow the fortress to stand. When this was rejected *cui bono*, was it to deplete the forts to enable the army to hold out longer to no purpose? Thus far on military grounds no one can blame him; but that he has let men starve while he had food anywhere that he could give them, constitutes a very grave moral responsibility. One of the chief of the Prussian medical staff has just told me that, do what he will, he cannot break the French convalescents of their craving for horseflesh. They will eat it, notwithstanding that they are receiving abundant rations of mutton. It is curious that the taste should have so grown upon them. The doctors oppose their eating horseflesh because they think that the entire change of diet will operate as much as anything in effecting a cure.

Yesterday was All Souls' Day, and high mass was celebrated in the splendid old cathedral. A number of Prussian soldiers were present, chiefly of the Rhenish regiments, in which there are many Catholics, and they mingled with a curiously picturesque effect among the French prisoners and the civilian population. When mass was over and the Roman Catholics had gone their ways, an Evangelical chaplain belonging to Kummer's division took possession of the pulpit, and held what the Scotch call a "diet" of public worship for the behoof of the Protestants. The Catholic townsfolk did not at all like this, which they designated profanation, but for many a day there has not been such a congregation in the noble edifice as that which gathered from the Landwehr division to hear the sermon from their chaplain. After service I strolled on to the adjacent market-place, and was the auditor of a little conversation which it may be

worth while to relate, since feathers show how the wind blows. Old Applewoman—"*Sacré*, these accursed Prussians are everywhere. They look as if they had been in Metz for ages." Second Old Applewoman—"Ah, take courage, my friend, Russia is arming to aid France." Third Old Applewoman—"Yes, and it is notorious that Saxony is itching to side with us." Sententious middle-aged corporal, with his head bandaged up—"Don't deceive yourselves, good ladies. The game is up. We had to yield to these terrible, irresistible Prussians. As we, so Paris. When the pinch comes, Paris will have to drop her arms, as we have done. The nation is beaten, and we had better accept the position."

I never tire of passing my time in watching the Place Royale and the Esplanade, on which are quartered the wounded. On the former are the railway-car hospitals, on the latter are fine roomy tents, holding twelve men each comfortably. What a variety of mutilations you notice among the convalescents! Men who have lost a leg, others a foot, others an arm; the gamut of mutilation is run up and down till you almost expect to see a man walking about without a head. It is a listless, weary promenade which these unfortunates execute. Some few form little groups for conversation, and others make belief to play at a kind of out-door billiards on a wooden frame on the ground, but most patrol languidly backwards and forwards, with a dejected listlessness that is the more painful to witness because it is so un-French-like. I suppose they must have been tired of the promenade at the top of the esplanade over against the river, for there are seldom more than a few there. And yet the view from it is one of which I think it must take a long time to get weary. If I could think the inhabitants of the esplanade possessed of so much depth of feeling, I would fain imagine that they shun the pro-

menade on the ramparts, because the sight of so much of beauty lost to France would wound them too poignantly. Behind, among the tents, are the statues, and the still bright flower-beds. In front, at one's feet, are the outworks, and then the broad stream of the river, with the fertile meadows of St. Simphorien beyond. On the right, across the stream, is the Isle de Saules, the island of the weeping willows, with its powder-magazines all but hidden among the graceful willows and the tall poplars. On the left is the citadel, with its green earthworks and glacis, and beyond, the beautiful suburb of Montigny, with the bend of the stream farther on ending in the railway bridge, the horizon to the south bounded by the range of heights, of which the highest is Mont St. Blaise, with its ruined château and the Observatory, from which I looked down on the plain and city ten days ago. No wonder that my prospect was a good one; as one looks up from the esplanade at Mont St. Blaise, it seems as if from it one could see through the windows into the houses of Metz. Over St. Simphorien is the other branch of the Moselle, fringed by the nestling villages of Moulin, St. Ruffine, Ban St. Martin, and Devant les Ponts, wearing a very peaceful aspect, but for the absence of smoke from the chimneys. Over them towers abruptly the rugged Mont St. Quentin, with the vineyards on its shoulders, lovingly hugging the white villages, then the bare interval of red scarp, and then the summit, crowned by the great spreading fortress, its warm-grey tint brought out in the slanting sunbeams. Well may St. Quentin be called "The eagle of Metz," soaring over the valley, as it does, up in the very sky. Alas! for France and Metz, the wings of the eagle are shorn. On its ramparts there is an eagle still, it is true, but it is the eagle on the helmet of the Prussian sentry, who, as he pauses in his beat and looks

down on what till last week deserved the name its inhabitants so fondly give it, "La Pucelle," may be trying how he can adapt the German song "Oh Strasburg, Oh Strasburg, du wunderschön stadt," to the new conquest. Verily, it is a wonderful city—a city for the possession of which to stake everything, and to fight to the last man and the last ditch! Now that the army has seen it—few who have not studied him know what an instinctive eye the German soldier has for the beauties of nature—he would not be a discreet man who should suggest that the prize should be let slip. Nothing has so much strengthened Bismarck's hand in his demand for Lorraine as the opportunity the army is having for seeing and admiring Metz.

CHAPTER XIII.

M. JULES FAVRE'S journey to Ferrières, and his interview with Count Bismarck, had not the effect of delaying or diverting for a single day the march of the great host which was advancing to invest Paris. The gates of the city were closed on the 19th of September, the German corps destined to guard the roads on the side of St. Germains took up their positions on the 21st, and thenceforth Paris was completely shut in. For days before the last approaches to the western outlet were closed, the railway stations had been blocked by crowds of men and women, with vans containing children and luggage, and at the last moment many persons had to escape leaving their property exposed to all the accidents of the siege. Left to itself, Paris was far from yielding to those feelings which would have been only natural in the isolated condition of the city. The discovery was soon made that Paris was itself a world. The sustaining reflection, moreover, was presented by journalists, poets, and orators without number, that the whole outer world was thinking only of Paris. "let the streets of the town devour the enemy," wrote M. Victor Hugo; "Let the tombs cry out; let flames spring everywhere from the earth; let every tuft of grass be as the burning torch; let it be felt that, behind each heart there is the people and God; let us organize the terrible battle of our country. As for Europe, she can look on." Days passed on, and the Germans had

done nothing more than repulse some slight attacks of outposts, and then it was remembered that if to transport an army of 250,000 men from Sedan to Paris was a difficult task, the transport of a siege train adequate to the reduction of a system of fortifications, the round of which could not be made in a journey of less than twenty-six miles, was an undertaking of still greater magnitude. The first business of the Germans, after securing all the avenues and exits of the capital—a work which they accomplished so well that without their leave it was not possible to send a message out of Paris, except by a balloon—was to secure provisions, and for this purpose small corps of infantry, cavalry, and artillery were organized, which spread themselves over the country for a distance of fifty miles, and made enormous requisitions of cattle, corn, and forage. In Paris, the eloquent narrative in which M. Jules Favre had described the failure of his negotiations, and the sternness with which Count Bismarck demanded the surrender of French territory, produced a profound impression, and prepared the citizens to make great efforts and sacrifices. Before the battle of Sedan the attention of General Trochu had been directed to the weak points in the system of permanent fortifications, which, constructed before science had shown the capabilities of rifled steel guns with elongated projectiles, were far from perfect, and several new works were undertaken at various points in order to give completeness and solidity to the defence. These were unfinished when the Germans arrived before Paris, and some of them it was necessary to abandon. Others, however, were within the protection of the permanent forts, and were finished, while lines of earthworks were thrown up in the intervals of the forts, and armed with powerful guns. More important, however, than all material preparations were the measures taken to place the largest possible number of men in a position to repel the

enemy, should he attack, or to go forth to expel him should his presence be prolonged before the capital. Count Bismarck had declared, in a pointed manner:—"We shall enter Paris without attacking it; we shall starve it out." It began to look as if such were indeed the deliberate intention of the enemy. The King of Prussia, following the Crown Prince, his son, had taken up his quarters, and was making himself at home at Versailles, and a Prussian Prefect of the Seine issued orders and gave audiences. Unless Paris were deliberately to resign herself to extreme suffering and ultimate surrender, a real army must be created, capable of advancing beyond the forts and assailing the enemy. The Government made so good use of its time, that by the first week in October, according to a declaration published by M. Gambetta, Minister of the Interior, 400,000 National Guards were armed, 100,000 Gardes Mobiles, including 80,000 from the departments, were in the capital, and with them were 60,000 regular troops. It was much to have brought together so large a force for the internal defence of the capital. The army of Paris was twice (perhaps it was three times) as large as that which the Germans had placed before the capital. But it was, by the admission of General Trochu, greatly deficient in organization and discipline, and almost entirely without field artillery. The National Guard was doubtless animated by the most ardent patriotism, but its composition did not fit it for the duties of an active field force. It was evident that something more must be done than preserve the Army of Paris if the capital was to be saved. At first it had been hoped that the departments, seeing Paris invested, would fly to its succour. But the departments at first showed no enthusiasm for such an enterprise. Lyons and Marseilles, which had proclaimed the Republic without waiting for instructions from any one, regarded Paris as a sister city, and not as

the indispensable head of France. In the rural districts the Republic was viewed with distrust. The excursions of the Prussian Uhlans, followed by the inevitable requisition column, had roused several departments to military action, but their efforts were directed to the protection of the neighbourhood immediately menaced; and at Paris it began to be complained that the defence of the country was being localized.

It was in these circumstances that M. Gambetta suddenly descended from the clouds near Amiens, on the 8th of October, and summoned France to "make a pact with victory or death." M. Gambetta had left Paris in a balloon the day before, taking with him, besides his secretary, a carrier pigeon, which was to return to the capital with intelligence of the issue of his adventure. From Amiens M. Gambetta went to Rouen, and thence to Tours, which was his destination. Three members of the Government, MM. Crémieux, Glais-Bizoin, and Admiral Fournichon, had gone to Tours, ju before Paris was invested, in the character of a Delegated Government; but they had done little but demonstrate their own incompetence. M. Gambetta's arrival was the beginning of a new state of things. He at once assumed unbounded authority, exercising dictatorial powers without reference to Paris, and made his vigorous influence felt in every department within his authority. The lively audacity of his proclamations, especially when he sought to efface some national disaster by proclaiming an incredible and wholly imaginary success, astonished even those who had been accustomed to the steady phlegmatic affirmations and denials of Count Palikao. For a week after the fall of Metz the population of Tours was in the highest spirits, believing, on M. Gambetta's assurance, that the affairs of the country had taken a new and happy turn. But while M. Gambetta thus sustained the hope of his countrymen, his real

reliance was based on measures dictated by patriotism and guided by good sense. He gave France armies, cannon, rifles; he gave her, what was better still, an example and a hope. He deposed veteran generals who had proved inefficient, and promised reward everywhere to those who could show merits bearing the seal of success. Under the impulsion of his energy, battalions became brigades, brigades divisions, and divisions armies; until at length France had once more a force which was the pure creation of patriotism, and which, if inexperienced, was at least not corrupted by the evil education of Africa, or demoralized by the retreats of the Imperial campaign.

During the first few weeks of the investment General Trochu steadfastly resisted the demands of the extreme Republicans that a great sortie should be made from Paris, and merely made a few reconnaissances, in which his young troops learned to stand under fire, and which, not being pushed beyond prudent limits, gave them the self-confidence they so much required. As the Germans neither made any attack on the forts, nor threw projectiles into Paris, the people of the capital resigned themselves to an attitude of expectation, and as far as circumstances permitted returned to their old ways of life. The moods and aspects of Paris at this period were described from time to time, as opportunities of sending correspondence arose, in the letters of a "Besieged Resident," of which the following are extracts:—

Sept. 19.—As my messenger to the post-office could get no authentic intelligence about what was passing, I went there myself. Everybody was in military uniform, everybody was shrugging his shoulders, and everybody was in the condition of a London policeman who should see himself marched off to the station by a street-sweeper. That the Prussians should have taken the Emperor prisoner, and have vanquished the French armies, had,

of course, astonished these worthy bureaucrats, but that they should have ventured to interfere with postmen had perfectly dumbfounded them. "Put your letter in that box," said a venerable employé on a high stool. "Will it ever be taken out?" I asked. "Qui sait?" he replied. "Shall you send off a train to-morrow morning?" I asked. There was a chorus of "Qui sait?" and the heads disappeared still farther with the respective shoulders to which they belonged. "What do you think of a man on horseback?" I suggested. An indignant "Impossible!" was the answer. "Why not?" I asked. The look of contempt with which the clerks gazed on me was expressive. It meant, "Do you really imagine that a functionary—a postman—is going to forward your letters in an irregular manner?" At this moment a sort of young French Jefferson Brick came in. Evidently he was a Republican recently set in authority. To him I turned. "Citizen," I said, "I want my letter to go to London. It is a Press letter. These bureaucrats say that they do not dare send it out by a horse express; I appeal to you, as I am sure you are a man of expedients." "These people," he replied, scowling at the clerks, "are demoralized. They are the ancient valets of a corrupt Court: give me your letter; if possible it shall go, 'foi de citoyen.'" I handed my letter to Jefferson, but whether it is on its way to England, or still in his patriotic hands, I do not know. As I passed out through the courtyard I saw postmen seated on the boxes of carts, with no horses before them. It was their hour to carry out the letters, and thus mechanically they fulfilled their duty. English Government officials have before now been jeered at as men of routine, but the most ancient clerk in Somerset House is a man of wild impulse and boundless expedient compared with the average of functionaries, great and small, here. The want of

"shiftiness" is a national characteristic. The French are like a flock of sheep without shepherds or sheep-dogs. Soldiers and civilians have no idea of anything except doing what they are ordered to do by some functionary. Let one wheel in an administration get out of order, and everything goes wrong. After my visit to the post-office I went to the central telegraph office, and sent you a telegram. The clerk was very surly at first, but he said that he thought a Press telegram would pass the wires. When I paid him he became friendly. My own impression is that my twelve francs, whoever they may benefit, will not benefit the British public.

Nothing in the papers this morning. In the *Figaro* an article from that old humbug, Villemessant. From some safe hole in the provinces he calls upon his fellow-citizens in Paris to resist to the death. "One thing Frenchmen never forgive," he says—"cowardice." The *Gaulois* contains the most news. It represents the Prussians to be all round Paris. At Versailles they have converted the Palace into a barrack. Their camp fires were seen last night in the forest of Bondy. Uhlans have made their appearance at St. Cloud. "Fritz" has taken up his quarters at Ferrières, the château of Baron Rothschild. "William"—we are very familiar when we speak of the Prussian Royal family—is still at Meaux. "No thunderbolt," adds the correspondent, "has yet fallen on him.' The Prussian outposts are at the distance of three kilometres from St. Denis. Near Vitry shots have been heard. In the environs of Vincennes there has been fighting. It appears that the General who was arrested yesterday was General Ambert. He was reviewing some regiments of Nationales, and when they cried "Vive la République" he told them that the Republic did not exist. The men immediately

surrounded him, and carried him to the Ministry of the Interior, where I presume he still is.

The butler of a friend of mine, whose house is close by the fortifications, and who has left it in charge, has just been to see me. The house is a "poste" of the National Guard. Butler says the men do not sleep on the ramparts, but in the neighbouring houses. They are changed every twenty-four hours. He had rather a hard time of it last night with a company from the Faubourg St. Antoine. As a rule, however, he says they are decent, orderly men. They complain very much that their business is going to rack and ruin: when they are away from their shops, they say, impecunious patriots come in to purchase goods of their wives, and promise to call another day to pay for them. On Saturday night the butler reports 300 National Guards were drawn up before his master's house, and twenty-five volunteers were demanded for a service of danger. After some time the twenty-five stepped forward, but having heard for what they were wanted, eighteen declined to go. A British coachman who has just turned up, offers to carry letters through. He seems a sharp plucky fellow, and I shall employ him as soon as the post-office is definitely closed. British coachman does not think much of the citizen soldiers in Paris. "Lor' bless you, sir! I 'd rather have 10,000 Englishmen than the lot of them. In my stable I make my men obey me, but these chaps they don't seem to care what their hofficers says to them." The Breton Mobiles are making pilgrimages to the churches. I hear the *curés* of Paris have divided the ramparts between them, and are on the fortifications—bravo! *curés*. By the bye, that fire-eater, Paul de Cassagnac, has not followed the example of his brother Imperial journalists. He enlisted as a Zouave, fought well, and was taken prisoner

at Sedan. He is now employed by his captors in making bread. I hope his bread will be better than his articles. I have been sitting with a friend who commands a company of National Guards. Friend tells me that a large number of National Guards have run away from Paris, and that those who remain are very indignant with them. He requests me to beg my countrymen, if they see a sturdy Monsieur swelling it down Regent Street, to kick him, as he ought to be defending his country. I fulfil his request with the greatest pleasure and endorse it. At the Embassy this morning I found Wodehouse sitting like Patience on a stool, with a number of Britons round him, who wanted to get off out of Paris. Wodehouse very justly told them that Lord Lyons had given them due notice to leave, and that they had chosen at their own risk to remain. The Britons seemed to imagine that their Embassy was bound to find them a road by which they might safely withdraw from the town. One very important Briton was most indignant—"I am a man of wealth and position. I am not accustomed to be treated in this manner. What is the use of you, sir, if you cannot ensure my safe passage to England? If I am killed the world shall ring with it. I shall myself make a formal complaint to Lord Granville," said this incoherent and pompous donkey. Exit man of position, fuming; enter unprotected female. Of course she was a widow, of course she had lost half a dozen sons, of course she kept lodgings, and of course she wanted her "hambassader" generally to take her under his wing. I left Wodehouse explaining to her that if she went out of Paris even with a pass, she might or might not be shot, according to circumstances. I will say for him that I should not be as patient as he is, were I worried and badgered by the hour by a crowd of shrieking women and silly men.

Sept. 22.—Yesterday afternoon we "manifested" against peace. We "manifest" by going, if we are in the National Guard, with bouquets at the ends of our muskets to deposit a crown of *immortelles* before the statue of Strasburg. If we are unarmed, we walk behind a drum to the statue and sing the "Marseillaise." At the statue there is generally some orator on a stool holding forth. We occasionally applauded him, but we never listen to him. After this we go the Place before the Hôtel de Ville, and we shout "Point de Paix!" We then march down the Boulevards, and go home satisfied that we have deserved well of our country. As yesterday was the anniversary of the proclamation of the First Republic, we were in a very manifesting mood. M. Gambetta issued proclamations every half hour, calling upon us, in more or less flowery language, to die for our country. M. Arago, the Mayor, followed suit, heading his manifestoes with the old rallying cry, "Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité." I suppose the French are so constituted that they really cannot exist without processions, bouquets to statues, and grand phrases. Notwithstanding all this humbug, a large portion of them mean. I am sure, to fight it out. They have taken it into their heads that Paris can be successfully defended, and if it is not, they are determined that it shall not be their faults. It is intended, I understand, to keep well beneath the cover of the forts, not to risk engagements more than is necessary—gradually to convert the splendid raw material of the Mobiles into good soldiers, by accustoming them to be under fire, and then, if things go well, to fall on one or other of the Prussian armies. It is hoped, too, that the Prussian communications will be menaced. Such is the plan, and every one pretends to believe that it will succeed; whether they are right or wrong time will show.

Of course I cannot be expected to give aid and comfort to our besiegers by telling them, if they seize this letter, what is being done inside to keep them out. But this I think, it will do them no harm to know. The National Guard mans the ramparts. In the angles of the bastions there are Mobiles. At points close by the ramparts there are reserves of Mobiles and National Guards, ready at a moment's notice, both by day and night, to re-inforce them. In the centre of the town there are reserves under arms. Outside the gates, between the forts and the ramparts, troops are massed with artillery, and the forts are well garrisoned. A gentleman who has lately been under a cloud, as he was the inventor of the Orsini bombs, has several thousand men at work on infernal machines. This magician assures me that within a week he will destroy the German armies as completely as were the Assyrians who besieged Jerusalem under Sennacherib. He is an enthusiast, but an excellent chemist, and I really have hopes that he will before long astonish our friends outside.

It is amusing to observe how every one has entered into the conspiracy to persuade the world that the French nation never desired war; to hear them, one would suppose that the Rhine had never been called the national frontier of France, and that the war had been entered into by Badinguet, as they style the late Emperor, against the wishes of the army, the peasantry, and the bourgeoisie. Poor old Badinguet has enough to answer for already, but even sensible Frenchmen have persuaded themselves that he, and he alone, is responsible for the war. He is absolutely loathed here. I sometimes suggest to some Gaul that he may possibly be back again here, some day; the Gaul immediately rolls his eyes, clenches his fists, and swears that if ever he returns to Paris he will himself shoot him.

Sept. 25 (Sunday).—They could stand it no longer; the afternoon was too fine. Stern patriotism unbent, and tragic severity of demeanour was forgotten. The Champs Elyseés and the Avenue de la Grand Armée were full of people. Monsieur shone by his absence; he was at the ramparts, or was supposed to be there; but his wife, his children, his *bonne*, and his kitchen-wench issued forth, oblivious alike of dull care and of bombarding Prussians, to enjoy themselves after their wont by gossiping and lolling in the sun. The Strasburg fetish had its usual crowd of admirers. Every bench in the Champs Elysées was occupied. Guitars twanged, organs were ground, merry-go-rounds were in full swing, and had it not been that here and there some regiment was drilling, one would have supposed one's self in some country fair. There were but few men; no fine toilets, no private carriages. It was a sort of Greenwich Park. At the Arc de Triomphe was a crowd trying to discover what was going on upon the heights above Argenteuil. Some declared they saw Prussians, while others with opera glasses declared that the supposed Prussians were only trees. In the Avenue de l'Impératrice was a large crowd gazing upon the Fort of Mont Valérien. This fort, because I presume it is the strongest for defence, is the favourite of the Parisians. They love it as a sailor loves his ship. "If I were near enough," said a girl near me, "I would kiss it." "Let me carry your kiss to it," replied a Mobile, and the pair embraced, amid the cheers of the people round them. At Auteuil there were *fiacres* full of sight-seers, come to watch the Prussian batteries at Meudon, which could be distinctly seen. Occasionally, too, there came a puff of smoke from one of the gunboats lying below Pont du Sour.

Sept. 26.—Do the Prussians really mean to starve us out? We have a bread and a meat maximum, but to

force a butcher to sell you a cutlet at the tariff price, one has to go with a corporal's guard, which cannot always be procured. The *Gazette Officielle* contains a decree regulating the sale of horseflesh. I presume, if the siege lasts long enough, dogs, rats, and cats will be tariffed. I have got 1,000f. with me. It is impossible to draw upon England, consequently I see a moment coming when, unless rats are reasonable, I shall not be able to afford myself the luxury of one oftener than once a week. When I am at the end of my 1,000f. I shall become an advocate for Felix Pyat's public tables, at which, as far as I understand his plan, those who have money pay, and those who have not, eat. How is it all to end? In a given time the Parisians will eat themselves out and fire themselves out. The credulity of the public is as great as ever. We are told that "France is rising, and that in a few weeks three armies will throw themselves on the Prussians, who are already utterly disorganized." In vain, I ask, "But what if these three armies do not make their appearance?" I am regarded as an idiot for venturing to discredit a notorious fact. If I dared, I would venture to suggest to some of my warlike friends, that a town which simply defends itself by shutting its gates, firing into space, and waiting for apocryphal armies, is not acting a very heroic part.

The Mobiles, who receive 1 franc 50 centimes a day, complain that they are unable to support themselves on this pittance. The conduct of these peasants is above all praise. Physically and morally they are greatly the superiors of the ordinary run of Parisians. They are quiet, orderly, and, as a rule, even devout. Yesterday I went into the Madeleine, where some service was going on. It was full of Mobiles listening to the prayers of the priest. The Breton regiments are accompanied by their priests, who bless them before they go on duty. If

the Parisians were not so thoroughly conceited, one might hope that the presence of these villagers would have a beneficial effect upon them, and show them that the Frenchmen out of Paris are worth more than those within it. The generation of Parisians which has arrived at manhood during the existence of the Empire is, perhaps, the most contemptible that the world has ever seen. If one of these worthies is rich enough, his dream has been to keep a mistress in splendour; if this has been above his means, he has attempted to hang on to some wealthy *vaurien*. The number of persons without available means who somehow managed to live on the fat of the land without ever doing a single day's honest work, had become enormous. Most of them have, on some pretext or other, sneaked out of Paris. One sees now very few ribbons of the Legion of Honour, notwithstanding the reckless profusion with which this order was lavished; the Emperor's flock, marked with the red streak, have disappeared.

Sept. 30.—I went this morning into a shop, the proprietor of which, a bootmaker, I have long known, and I listened with interest to the conversation of this worthy man with some of his neighbours who had dropped in to have a gossip, and to congratulate him on his martial achievements, as he had been on guard in a bastion. We first discussed why the Army of the Loire had not arrived, and we came to the conclusion that it was engaged in rallying Bazaine. "I should like to read your English newspapers now," said one; "your *Times* told us we ought to cede Alsace and Lorraine, its editor must now acknowledge that Paris is now invincible." I told him that I felt convinced that he did so regularly every morning. "No peace," shouted a little tailor, who had been prancing about on an imaginary steed, killing imaginary Prussians; "we have made a pact with death;

the world knows now what are the consequences of attacking us." The all-absorbing question of subsistence then came up, and some one remarked that beef would give out sooner than mutton. "We must learn," observed a jolly-looking grocer, "to vanquish the prejudices of our stomach. Even those who do not like mutton must make the sacrifice of their taste to their country." I mildly suggested that perhaps in a few weeks the stomachs which had a prejudice against rats would have to overcome it. At this the countenances of the gossips fell considerably, when the bootmaker, after mysteriously closing the door, whispered, "A secret was confided to me this morning by an intimate friend of General Trochu. There is a tunnel which connects Paris with the provinces, and through it flocks and herds are entering the town." This news cheered us up amazingly. My bootmaker's wife came in to help him off with his military accoutrements; so, with a compliment about Venus disarming Mars, I withdrew in company with an American, who had gone into the shop with me. This American is a sort of transatlantic Bunsly. He talks little, but thinks much. His sole observation to me as we walked away was this, "They will squat, sir; mark my words, they will squat." I received this oracular utterance with respect, and I leave it to others to solve its meaning. I am myself a person of singular credulity, but even I sometimes ask myself whether all I hear and read can be true. Was there really, as all the newspapers this morning inform me, a meeting last Sunday in London of 400,000 persons, who were addressed by eminent M.P.'s, by the principal merchants and owners of manufactories in England, at which resolutions were adopted denouncing the Queen, and calling upon Mr. Gladstone either to retire from office or to declare war against Prussia?

Oct. 10.—Having nothing particularly to boast of to-day, the newspapers request the world to be good enough to turn its eyes upon Gambetta traversing space in a balloon. A nation whose Minister is capable of this heroic feat must eventually drive the enemy from its soil. The *Figaro*, in fact, hints that in all probability peace will be signed at Berlin at no very distant date. The *Gaulois*, a comparatively sensible newspaper, thus deals with this aërial voyage:—"As the balloon passed above the Prussian armies, amid the clouds and the birds, the old William probably turned to Bismarck, and asked, 'What is that black point in the sky?' 'It is a Minister,' replied Bismarck; 'it is the heroic Gambetta, on his way to the Loire. In Paris he named prefects; on the Loire he will assemble battalions.' Favourable winds wafted the balloon on her course; perhaps Gambetta landed at Cahors, his natal town, perhaps somewhere else—perhaps in the arms of Crémieux, that aged lion. To-morrow the provinces will resound with his voice, which will mingle with the rattling of arms and the sound of drums. Like a trumpet, it will peal along the Loire, inflaming hearts, forming battalions, and causing the manes of St. Just and Desmoulins to rise from their graves."

Nov. 14.—The ration of fresh meat is now reduced in al most all the arrondissements to 30 grammes a head There is no difficulty, however, in obtaining for money any quantity of it in the restaurants. In the bouillons only one portion is served to each customer. Cats have risen in the market—a good fat one now costs 10 francs. Those that remain are exceedingly wild. These sagacious animals seem to have remarked a murderous intention in the eyes of their former friends. This morning I had a *salmis* of rats—it was excellent—something between frog and rabbit. I breakfasted with the cor-

respondents of two of your contemporaries. One of them, after a certain amount of hesitation, allowed me to help him to a leg of a rat; after eating it he was as anxious as a terrier for more. The latter, however, scornfully refused to share in the repast. As he got through his portion of salted horse, which rejoiced in the name of beef, he regarded us with horror and disgust. I remember, when I was in Egypt, that my feelings towards the natives were of a somewhat similar nature when I saw them eating rat. The older one grows the more tolerant one becomes. If ever I am again in Paris I shall eat the national dish whenever I get a chance. During the siege of Londonderry rats sold for 7*s*. each, and if this siege goes on many weeks longer, the utmost which a person of moderate means will be able to allow himself will be an occasional mouse. I was curious to see whether the proprietor of the restaurant would boldly call rat, rat in my bill. His heart failed him—it figures as a *salmi* of game.

While Paris was thus helpless, fortress after fortress was falling. The capitulation of Soissons, Verdun, Schelestadt, and Neu Breisach were followed by those of Toul, Strasburg, and Metz. The troops set at liberty by the earliest of these surrenders were sent southwards under General Werder, to keep in check the forces which, at Belfort, Besançon, and Lyons, were preparing to march against the communications of the German army near the Vosges. General Werder did not advance beyond Dijon, where, however, in a position of observation, his army did excellent service. It was to this part of France that General Garibaldi was sent by M. Gambetta, immediately on his arrival to offer his sword to the Republic. The General's operations did not at once satisfy the expectations which his arrival had raised. Differences arose between him and the neighbouring French

generals; and he himself appears to have expected rather to have a regularly organized army corps placed at his disposal than to be left to make the most of a miscellaneous assemblage of irregular troops. The infirm state of his health, moreover, disqualified him for the fatigues of an active campaign. His sons, however, were with him, and his presence inspired in others the enthusiasm which prompts to daring deeds. The first blow which informed the Germans in that part of France that an active enemy was near them was struck by Ricciotti Garibaldi, under the circumstances described in the following letter, dated—

Montbard, Côte d'Or, Nov. 20.—On leaving Semur by diligence this afternoon we passed through a long range of hills which bounds the town on the northern side. The road then passes through a country where one sees scarcely any other trees but poplars and willow-stumps. Apple and pear trees, however, in many places grow beside the road, but the vine is only cultivated in little batches, few and far between. Heifers had been turned out to grass, and were browsing along with the cows, tended by children in the different pasture-fields with which the country abounds. But we had left far behind us the poultry, donkeys, and the long-legged, lean-looking pigs, which seem to be the principal farm produce in the country which lies between Autun and Saulieu. It was Sunday. At the different villages through which we passed the peasantry swarmed in the streets—the men in their Sunday hats and blouses, and the women in clean white caps. Many had left their houses and were gathered in groups along the high road, awaiting the arrival of the Prussian prisoners. On reaching the town of Montbard, the road passes through the railway bridge, parallel with which is the canal running at the foot of a little hill, from the crown of which, out of the midst of

a wood of fir-trees, rises the tower of the Château of Montbard, better known as the Château of Buffon, where the celebrated naturalist composed all his works.

We reached Montbard at about three o'clock in the afternoon, and found at the very entrance the streets lined with the National Guard, behind whom were a compact crowd waiting to see the prisoners pass on their way to Semur. The diligence set me down at the entrance to the town, and elbowing my way through the crowd as best I could, I at once proceeded to Colonel Ricciotti's head-quarters. He had been breakfasting at the Hôtel de la Poste with the commanders of the different companies of Francs-tireurs, and was somewhat surprised to see me. After introducing me to his companions, he exclaimed in French—"These journalists beat everything I ever saw. I hardly thought the news could have reached Autun, and here's a reporter, whom I thought with my father, ready to take everything down." While we were talking over the events of the previous day an officer came to say that the prisoners were about to leave for Semur. I therefore went down to have a look at them. They were all in carts, at the bottom of which was a quantity of straw, and were escorted by the National Guards of Semur, who marched on either side. As I foresaw in my letter of yesterday evening, and that of this afternoon, dated from Semur, the information respecting the fighting at Châtillon was very much exaggerated, but the affair was, notwithstanding, both brilliant and clever, and every praise is due to the gallant young colonel, who, although the youngest in our army, has nevertheless made the first stroke, and a very daring one it was. Here is the account of the action which he has just handed me:—

On the 17th he was at Saulieu, and while there received information that 800 Germans, belonging to the 7th

Army Corps, 11th Division, 27th Infantry Brigade, and 3rd Landwehr Regiment, were quartered at Châtillon, which lies at about thirty kilometres from here, and eighty kilometres N.W. of Dijon, on the road to Troyes. Ricciotti had with him 560 men, composed of the Chasseurs du Doubs, the Chasseurs du Havre, the Chasseurs de Lisère, the Chasseurs de la Haute Savoie, the Chasseurs de Dôle, the Chasseurs des Alpes, and the Francs-tireurs des Vosges. He immediately ordered a forced march to Montbard, forty-two kilometres distant. He reached this place during the night, and the following morning set out for Culmier-le-Sec, where he arrived at two o'clock in the afternoon. At Culmier-le-Sec he rested his men, and at one o'clock in the morning he marched towards Châtillon. At 5.30 A.M. he arrived within a few hundred yards of the town, and immediately divided his troops into two corps, one being sent to make an attack on the western side, on the road to Tonnerre, while the other attacked on the southern side. Eighty men—the Francs-tireurs of the Haute Savoie—were then despatched to surround the Hôtel de la Côte d'Or, where Colonel Ricciotti knew the Staff officers were lodged. The attack was commenced by surprising the enemy's foreposts and the sentinels. A little before six o'clock in the morning the Colonel entered the town at the head of his troops, and fighting then commenced. The war-cry was Garibaldi! Garibaldi! Almost all the German soldiers were in bed, so that an immense number were made prisoners in the houses, the doors of which were forced open. The remainder rushed out only half-dressed, with whatever arms they managed to lay their hands on, and as they appeared in the street were shot down. In the meanwhile the Francs-tireurs of the Haute Savoie had surrounded the Hôtel de la Côte d'Or, and surprised the officers in bed. The greater portion of them were

made prisoners, but several desperately defended themselves and were killed. Shortly after Ricciotti and his men entered Châtillon couriers on horseback were despatched by the enemy in the directions of Chaumont and Laignes.

After thirty minutes' fighting a considerable number of the enemy abandoned the town, escaping along the high road towards Chaumont. The remainder, who had recovered from their surprise, concentrated themselves in the Town Hall, which Colonel Ricciotti decided on not attacking, the enemy holding a tolerably strong position, and he not wishing to lose men, his force being small. Besides, news came that 4,000 Prussians were at Laignes, and 1,400 on the road between Chaumont and Châtillon, and it was feared that reinforcements would arrive before the Town Hall could be captured.

I should mention here that of the 560 men who marched with Ricciotti from Saulieu, 150 had been sent out reconnoitring, so that in reality he made the attack with only 410 men, while the enemy numbered 800.

After holding the town for precisely one hour and a quarter, news came to the effect that the German troops, already signalled on the road from Chaumont to Châtillon, were only $5\frac{1}{2}$ kilometres distant. Colonel Ricciotti at once ordered a retreat, which was executed in the most perfect order, the Francs-tireurs carrying along with them 167 prisoners, among whom were eleven officers, as well as sixty-two horses, four carriages, saddles, and harness; arms, such as sabres, revolvers, and needle-gun rifles; a quantity of ammunition, several cases of German cigars, and boxes of papers and letters belonging to the Staff. The enemy's losses in killed and wounded are calculated at more than 100, among whom two colonels and two majors were killed: one of the colonels was the German prefect of the town. From the state of his helmet it

would seem that he had been shot right through the head, for the back shows distinctly the place where the ball came out. Our losses were three killed and twelve wounded, but one of these is very dangerously hurt, and not likely to live for more than a few hours.

The good fortune of the Garibaldians was, however, soon to suffer a check. The Special Correspondent with Garibaldi wrote from Autun, on the 28th of November :—

At Somberum, at eight o'clock in the evening, I was awakened by very disagreeable news. General Bosak and his troops had been attacked by the enemy in the course of the morning; he had been abandoned by the Mobile Guard, who fled without firing a shot, and the General had been consequently forced to retreat with something like eighty men, who remained with him. Thinking it extremely likely that Ricciotti's brigade might be called up, I had my horse saddled, and went to Pont-Pagnier, where I arrived just as Colonel Ricciotti received an order to move forward with his brigade to Lantenay, 10 kilometres from Pont-Pagnier, and about 23 from Dijon. We set out at the appointed hour along a road across the hills, and reached Lantenay early in the morning. The village of Lantenay is very small—450 inhabitants; so that a large portion of the troops had had to pass the night in the fields round camp-fires. On arriving at head-quarters, which were in an old château on the hill, I learnt that the General and his Staff were out reconnoitring. I went out into the street, and found Major Erbe, of the Tanara Legion, on horseback. The Major told me that all the troops were being set in motion. Although I had not eaten since twelve o'clock on the previous day, this was no moment to think of breakfasting. With the leg of a turkey in one hand and a piece of bread in the other, I mounted my horse and galloped up the hill

without asking for any further information. When I reached the plain on the summit of the hill behind Lantenay, the troops were coming up the road. At 12.30 they had all arrived, and were drawn up at the side of the wood. From the plateau we could distinguish the enemy plainly enough drawn up on the rising ground immediately behind the village of Prenois. From a battery on the hills behind us, beyond the valley of Ouche, the enemy were firing—evidently a feint to attract our attention from the movement in the direction of Prenois. I had ridden out to two mounted scouts who were observing the enemy's movements from the extremity of the plain. Suddenly on the left of the village we saw two or three black spots on the horizon. We at first took them for scouts, who had been sent out to reconnoitre, but a minute or two afterwards they changed into a black mass two or three inches long. This was evidently a German column advancing. We waited for a few minutes until we saw the black line getting bigger and bigger, and I then rode back with the scouts to inform the General. Garibaldi was breakfasting. He immediately mounted his horse and proceeded to draw up his troops in line of battle. The artillery was placed on rising ground on the left. Francs-tireurs were sent into the wood on the right, and the column ordered to advance. The Garibaldians of the Tanara Legion were, I believe, on the left, the Francs-tireurs on the right, the Genoese in the centre, and the Mobile Garde behind. I was so far in front with the Staff, which moved about all day between the skirmishers and the bulk of the army, that it was impossible to distinguish the different uniforms of the troops. Our batteries opened fire a little after one, and were answered by the Germans from the rising ground behind Prenois. The German cannon-balls whistled over our heads, but did us very little harm, and

our right wing continued to advance in excellent order. Presently an aide-de-camp was despatched to the rear, to order an advance on all the line. At this moment the General and his Staff were on the right, a considerable distance in front. Turning back a few minutes afterwards to see if the order had been executed, he exclaimed, "*Cela fait plaisir* to see an army of the Republic advancing like that." At about a quarter to two the enemy fired a few howitzer-shells, none of which, however, reached us. Suddenly the General, who had been watching the German column through a field-glass, turned to his Staff, and exclaimed, "They are retreating!" and then, calling the captain of the 7th Chasseurs d'Afrique, he said, "Go and see if you cannot pick up a few stragglers." We had now advanced to the verge of the first hollow, and from the high ground above we had an admirable view of the charge below. The cavalry, thirty-nine in number, accompanied by Colonel Canzio, Garibaldi's son-in-law, and Captain Tironi, galloped after the enemy, who were running away over the high ground beyond Prenois. To get at them, however, it was necessary to pass by a wall close to the village, and behind this the Germans had placed twenty or thirty men to protect their retreat. When the cavalry had arrived to within a few yards of the wall, they were received with three volleys of musketry. Not one of them turned back. They merely changed their course, and galloped up to the wall. Unfortunately it was too high for the horses to jump, and while they turned to get round at the other side the Germans behind it managed to escape. The most extraordinary thing was that the discharges only killed eight horses and wounded three men. A few minutes later the Garibaldians, led by Colonel Tanara and Major Erbe, entered Prenois, and were received with loud and repeated cries of "Vivent les Garibaldians!"

Five minutes afterwards we were far ahead, galloping by the few dead bodies that were scattered here and there over the battle-field. We were now on the verge of a second hollow. Before us was the last high ground, which seemed to run perfectly horizontal from west to east. Before us, on the left, was a second village, and on our right a wood, extending to the top of the rising ground, bordered the hollow. The Germans were evidently getting away as fast as they could, for we saw nothing more of them. But, with the *sang-froid* which is characteristic of a well-disciplined army, they defended the ground, and covered their retreat on every favourable occasion. Our left, which was a long way ahead, stopped while our right, backed up by the Mobile Guard, was ordered to advance along the side of the wood to prevent the enemy from attacking us in that direction, for, as we could not see the road they had taken, we were undecided as to whether they had turned to the right or gone straight ahead. Presently, however, we saw that they had established a battery on the high ground before us, which opened a rapid fire upon our advancing columns. Nothing, however, stopped our advance; our cannon answered theirs from the incline on the opposite side of the hollow, and after ten minutes' firing we saw their artillery make off. When we reached the top of the rising ground we found ourselves upon the road from Paris to Dijon, where we waited while the remainder of the troops came up. It was now raining hard. The General, who had been on horseback all day, was tired, the more so as his horse had fallen with him early in the afternoon. A carriage was procured at a neighbouring house. The General, accompanied by Colonel Canzio, got into it, and, surrounded by the officers of his Staff, placed himself at the head of the column. Three

spies, dressed as peasants, were then sent forward with instructions to tell the enemy that we were advancing along the road in force with cavalry and artillery. We gave them a quarter of an hour to get ahead, and the column was then set in motion, a few cavalry scouts being sent in front, and the General and his Staff at the head of the column. We had marched for about ten minutes without seeing or hearing anything of the enemy, when we came to the spot where the road to Dijon turns to the right. Five hundred yards farther on the General's carriage drew up on the right-hand side of the road, and the advanced guard was sent forward. It was now quite dark, the sky was as black as coal, but not far ahead on the left we saw the light which rose from Dijon, and illuminated the sky above. The advanced guard had been gone about five minutes, other troops had followed, when suddenly the reports of two needle-guns were heard. These were followed by several others, and we then knew that our advanced guard had reached the Prussian outposts. The order given to the troops had been "Do not fire; use your bayonets, and we shall sleep at Dijon to-night." Hardly two or three minutes after the first discharge there came a regular shower of bullets, which whistled about our ears in a most unpleasant fashion. The only thing that surprises me is that two-thirds were not killed. The General's carriage was beside the high road, surrounded by the officers of his Staff, and yet by the most miraculous chance not one was killed, or even hurt. "It 's getting hot," said an officer beside me. He had hardly uttered the last word when there came a second shower of lead, and then a third. This time we all leant over our horses' necks. Fortunately for us the Prussian fire was very high, and consequently almost all the balls passed over our heads. Several of my companions

however, had their kepis grazed and their cloaks pierced. Colonel Bordone's horse got a ball in its nose, but no one was wounded. Our troops continued to advance. In front were the Italians, the Chasseurs des Alpes, and several other companies of Francs-tireurs. Presently we found ourselves almost alone beside the road. Ahead we still heard the burr of the mitrailleuses, but none of the balls reached us. It was evident from this that the enemy's batteries had retreated. Immediately behind us were our two batteries of artillery, and behind them the remainder of our troops. An aide-de-camp was sent to bring them up, and as after two or three minutes no one appeared on the scene of action, a second was despatched. I accompanied the third, to see what was the matter. On arriving at the end of our line of artillery we found the Mobile Guard, many of whom pretended that the road was encumbered by the cannon and ammunition waggons. "Where are the officers?" exclaimed the aide-de-camp. No one answered; several of them had hidden their heads in the hoods of their cloaks. After a deal of difficulty a few officers were found, and the Mobiles were set in motion, advancing towards the front on either side of the artillery. The Staff officers moved on a considerable distance with them, and did all they could to encourage them. There was singing of the "Marseillaise" and cries of "Vive la République!" and when we drew up our horses beside the road for the second time we thought that all was right. Then there came a second shower of lead, which, like those which we had already experienced, passed either over our heads or beside us. The Mobile Guard were so terror-stricken that some threw themselves flat on the ground, while others leapt into the ditches on either side of the road, without receiving any order to that effect. This last fire was followed by a deadly

silence, which was only broken by a few musketry shots far ahead. The Mobiles, in throwing themselves on the ground, had wounded each other with their bayonets. This naturally produced considerable confusion in the ranks; getting up again. they continued their clumsiness. Some were wounded in the feet; others in the legs; others in the hands and arms; and others in the back. I have since seen many of the wounded, and am therefore able to guarantee this statement. When the Mobiles had risen from the ground, they brought their rifles to their shoulders, and, although they had been expressly ordered to use their bayonets only, fired. A large portion of our troops were à considerable distance ahead, and they of course received the volley. You can easily form an idea of the confusion that ensued. The Italians and Francs-tireurs, who up to the present had sustained the German fire with admirable coolness, imagined that they were attacked by the enemy in the rear. Many of them evidently thought that they were cut off from the other portion of the army, and did their best to reach it. The Mobiles, seeing men coming towards them, turned tail and fled. Persuasion and menaces were alike powerless to bring them back. When kind words had failed, the officers of the Staff drew their swords and struck them over the back with the flat part, but the cowardly mass dodged them and fled into the fields. Then a certain number of aides-de-camp galloped to the head of the column, and implored the men to return; but they obstinately hastened along the road with their backs turned to the enemy. The retreat now became general. Garibaldi and his Staff were left almost alone, surrounded only by the 7th Chasseurs d'Afrique and the Italians. If at this moment the enemy had sent 500 horsemen after us, half of our army would have been either made prisoners or cut to pieces. Fortunately for us the Ger-

mans seemed to be contented with having driven us back, and did not seem to have any idea of the advantage they had gained.

The supplies necessary for the subsistence of the vast army besieging Paris were only partially drawn from Germany. Every day the roads leading to the capital for a distance of fifty or sixty miles from the city were traversed by numerous herds and flocks obtained by "requisitions," which were made beyond the limits of the devastation ordered by the French Government. Three weeks after Paris had been shut in, the first serious resistance to the columns sent out to make requisitions was encountered by a Prussian force at Toury, fifty-four miles on the road to Orleans. The defeat of a Prussian column of 2,500 men on the 5th of October led to the despatch of an Army Corps under General von der Tann, which cleared the way to Orleans, and entered that city on the 11th of October, after a combat in and about the city lasting nine hours. These events signalized the first appearance of the Army of the Loire on the field of battle. The division which represented it on the 11th retired south of the Loire as far as La Ferté St. Aubin, where troops from the east, south, and west were also assembled, and whence in a very short time the army was to return to the right bank and undertake important operations.

By the second week in November it became evident that the French were about to put forth determined efforts to retrieve their military position. M. Thiers, who had made the journey from Tours to Versailles in order to induce Count Bismarck to grant an armistice which should permit of the revictualling of Paris, had failed in that object, the Prussian Minister insisting that he ought not to grant so great an advantage to the French, except in return for some military equivalent. On the 7th, General von der Tann

ascertained by reconnaissances that a French force was marching towards the road from Orleans to Paris, and had reached the forest of Marchenoir. On the 8th he marched out of Orleans with the 1st Bavarian Corps, moving westward, and on the 9th fell in with the French near Coulmiers. The Germans were about 18,000 strong, the French, under General d'Aurelle de Paladine, were about 60,000, but it is not certainly known how many were engaged. The Bavarians held their ground with great tenacity, repulsing successive charges of the French, until nightfall, when General von der Tann ordered a retreat in the direction of the reinforcements which were being sent to him from Chartres and Versailles. His junction with these was effected on the following day, but in the meantime Orleans had been occupied by the French. General d'Aurelle omitted no means of strengthening this regained position, and as the reinforcements he could receive were almost unlimited, no attempt was immediately made by the enemy to recapture Orleans. The movements of the French had made it evident that the mission of the Army of the Loire was nothing less than to attack the Army of the Crown Prince of Prussia in its rear, and relieve Paris. As soon as the French success at Orleans had been achieved, M. Gambetta issued a proclamation to the army, announcing that the Government expected the deliverance of the capital from its valour. General d'Aurelle, however, did not follow up his success so promptly as had been expected. Day after day he remained near Orleans in a state of inactivity, which by no known facts could be accounted for. Von der Tann withdrew from Toury, whither he had at first retreated, to Angerville, on the road to Etampes, and it was thought that he must have done so in expectation of an attempt of the Army of the Loire to march to Paris. But by the middle of November General von Voight Rhetz, commander of the 10th Corps, part of the army

of Prince Frederick Charles, had arrived at Tonnerre with 20,000 men; and the Duke of Mecklenburg, with the right wing of the German army on the Loire, no longer regarding General d'Aurelle, marched westward, occupied Dreux after a short engagement, marched across the department of the Eure et Loire, and then through the Orne and the Sarthe as far as Bellême. Notwithstanding the weakened condition of Von der Tann, who had been left behind, General d'Aurelle remained in his position before Orleans, instead of striking at the enemy before the German reinforcements could come up.

The feeble resistance which the Duke of Mecklenburg had encountered in his advance was that of ill-organized troops raised in the west. By the end of November, however, General d'Aurelle began to move. He had formed an entrenched camp before Orleans, and armed it with ninety-five naval guns, manned by seamen from Cherbourg: it was believed that behind this defence his army might hold its ground under any circumstances, while drawing reserves and supplies from the country behind the Loire. The French army formed a semicircle around Orleans from the Forest of Cercottes, which it occupied, to the environs of Meung. On the extreme left the 17th Corps, under the orders of General de Sonis, was at first placed at Châteaudun, an advanced and dangerous position, which exposed that corps to the risk of being cut off, and which it became necessary to abandon. The disposition of the main body of the army was as follows:—On the left was the 16th Corps, under General de Chanzy; in the centre, with the head-quarters, the 15th, under General Martin des Pallières; on the right, the 20th, commanded by General Crouzat, who had been summoned in great haste from Chagny. The extreme right was formed by the 18th Corps, which at first was stationed at Gien, but took up a position at the extremity of the forest and in front of Montargis. The

German right was commanded by the Duke of Mecklenburg, the centre by General von der Tann, and the left by Prince Frederick Charles. On the 28th of November, General d'Aurelle attacked the 10th Prussian Army Corps and 1st Cavalry Division, forming the German left wing at Beaune de Rolande, and had very nearly overthrown them, when the arrival of Prince Frederick Charles changed the fortunes of the day.

Just as the news of this engagement reached Tours, intelligence arrived there that General Ducrot had made a great sortie from Paris, and the manner in which the two events were announced in the speeches and proclamations of M. Gambetta satisfied the world that the efforts of the Army of the Loire and the garrison of Paris had been concerted with a view to a common object. Fontainebleau was the point at which the two armies were to join hands, raise the siege of Paris, and incessantly attack the Germans, whose supplies would be cut off by a similar rising in their rear. It was necessary, however, for this purpose, that each French army should succeed in its separate enterprise, whereas, as we shall see, both failed.

On the 1st of December, Von der Tann was vehemently attacked, while reconnoitring on the old road to Chartres, and driven in a north-westerly direction past Loigny. On the 2nd the Grand Duke joined him and attacked and retook that position, and sent on a division to pursue the French in their retreat. On the same day General Chanzy, who commanded the 16th French Army Corps, sent two divisions as far as Artenay, which returned without fighting, and another division which attacked the Grand Duke's left wing, but was driven back past Poupry. The main body of the Army of the Loire was disposed with a view to cover Orleans, and against that point Prince Frederick Charles directed the bulk of his forces.

His rapid movements rendered it impossible for the French to employ two of their Corps, stationed at Montargis, in time for the defence of the city. He sent the 9th Corps to Toury-Bazoches, the 3rd to Pithiviers, and the 15th, with three brigades, to Boyne. The 9th Corps was to advance on the road from Paris, the 3rd on that from Fontainebleau, and those of the Grand Duke on the road from Chartres to Orleans. On the morning of the 3rd the Prince Frederick Charles's joined the 9th Corps. The 18th Division advanced to Artenay, which the French had evacuated, and at Moulin d'Auvillers, a few miles farther on, defeated the enemy after some severe fighting, and continued their advance to Chevilly. This village, the key to the wood of Orleans, was already in the hands of the Grand Duke. On the evening of the day the 3rd Corps, after taking Sancerre, which was strongly fortified, and Chillers-aux-Bois, had advanced as far as Toury. The 9th Corps had only reached Crottes and Aschires, as Château St. Germain-le-Grand had been strongly fortified. The 10th Corps had taken Neuvilleaux-Bois, and driven the French back into the wood. On the 4th of December, the attack was recommenced. The 9th Corps advanced, and was met by a sharp fire from the wood. General von Blumenthal took Cercottes, after some very severe fighting. In the meantime, the 36th Brigade advanced about four miles beyond St. Live, where the way had been strongly barricaded. On the right wing, the Grand Duke had gradually driven the French backwards towards Orleans, and on the left, the 3rd Corps had reached St. Loup with but little fighting. In the evening, the German troops stood north, west, and east of Orleans. The road to the south alone remained open to the French, and by this they effected their retreat, the Germans re-occupying the city.

The fighting on the Loire had been very severe. The corps of Generals Chanzy and de Sonis included many patriotic Breton leaders, who had brought their attached countrymen with them to fight in the most sacred of causes, and many of them fell. The Duke of Luynes was killed, Colonel Charette, commander of Papal Zouaves, was wounded, and General Cathelineau was made prisoner.

At Tours the losses of the Army of the Loire during this fatal week were computed at 15,000. The Germans, however, alleged, in their official journals that they had taken 16,000 prisoners. The retreating French corps were pursued beyond and along the Loire. On the 7th of November General Chanzy was overtaken near Beaugency, and on the following day was defeated with loss. The issue of this battle determined the Government Delegation at Tours to remove its seat to Bordeaux. The Army of the Loire had not been destroyed. Including its reserve of 100,000, brought up from the south-east, it still numbered over 200,000 to 250,000 men: it had suffered reverses but not a disaster, and it had given France assurances that her children had not lost their old capacity for war.

The great sortie from Paris before referred to began on the 29th of November, when General Vinoy led a force towards L'Hay and Choisy le Roi; but the chief effort of the garrison was made on the 30th. Generals Trochu and Ducrot addressed the army in the most energetic language on the greatness of the issue of the intended operations, and the duty of shrinking from no sacrifice for the country. In the night of the 29-30th General Ducrot issued from the Forest of Vincennes, crossed the Marne, with a force variously estimated at from 80,000 to 120,000 men, and fought obstinately to break through the lines held by the Wurtembergers and Saxons. He succeeded in advancing a considerable distance, but when night fell

he had been compelled to fall back to Brie and Champigny on the river, where, however, he remained. On the day following there was no fighting, but on the 2nd an attempt was made to retake Brie and Champigny, but, although the Germans were able to dislodge the enemy from those villages, they found that the fire of the forts made it impossible to hold them. The letter in which the Special Correspondent with the Army of the Meuse, under the Crown Prince of Saxony, describes the operations of the 2nd, also gives the topographical details necessary for following the plan of the original sortie:—

The reader must take to the map, if he would understand the events of the day. He will notice how the Marne, beginning at Cournay, runs first nearly due west to a little beyond Noisy le Grand, then makes a sweep south, on the eastern bank of which sweep stands the village of Brie, and then forms a couple of loops, within the most northerly of which are the villages of St. Maur and Champigny, and some distance to the east of the wide neck of the loop the larger village of Villiers-sur-Marne. It was in and around the three villages of Brie, Villiers, and Champigny where was enacted the bloody drama of November 30. When the curtain fell on that drama the Saxons stood fast in Villiers, spite of all that the French troops and the French forts could do to dislodge them. Brie and Champigny, lying so close under the lee of Fort Nogent and a strongly armed earthwork at Faisanderie, on the verge of the forest of Vincennes, overhanging St. Maur, remained in the hands of the French, for whatever good they were. What this advantage represented was simply this—that Brie gave them a footing, so to speak, on the Saxon mainland, while Champigny formed the key to the peninsula formed by the loop of the Marne. Whether the risk, nay the certainty, of the severe loss entailed in

an attempt to dislodge from positions, which may be fairly designated as outworks of their fortifications, is to be weighed in the balance, in a military sense, against the advantage to be gained by beating the Frenchmen out of places so protected, is a question the reply to which does not rest with me. But if it did, I would candidly give it as my opinion that the object of the besiegers would have been equally served by giving their forepost line on this face a wider and a safer sweep. A line drawn from Gournay to Chennevieres presents a continuous defensive position of considerable strength, the complement of which might be found in the utter destruction by fire and crowbar of the villages of Noisy and Villiers. Such a line would, at all events, have presented this advantage, that there need have been no fresh earth mounds, beneath which lie dead children of the Fatherland, outside it on the side towards the French forts.

But speculations of this kind are as tedious as they must be purposeless. The object of the day on the side of the Germans was to dislodge the French from these two villages—Brie and Champigny. To essay this task fell to the lot of Saxons, Wurtembergers, and a brigade of the 2nd Army Corps. The Saxons engaged consisted of the second division of the Royal Saxon Army (the 24th division of the German host), under the command of General von Netirhoff, and composed of the 104th, 105th, 106th, 107th, and 108th Regiments. This, taking each regiment at its full strength of three battalions, would represent fifteen battalions, or about 12,000 men; but, as more than one battalion was naturally elsewhere engaged on forepost duty, it may be outside the exact figures to put down the Saxon force engaged at 10,000 men. Before the commencement of operations these splendid troops occupied positions in Noisy, Champs, Cournay, Villiers, and the vicinity. The division of the Würtemburgers,

the strength of which I cannot gauge, was commanded by General von Obernitz, a Prussian officer. Their positions were Ormesson, Chennevieres, La Queue Noiseau, and the vicinity. I have spoken of a brigade of the 2nd Army Corps as co-operating, but I have reason to believe that this contingent was neither strictly a brigade nor did it amount to a division, but was made up of contributions from various portions of the Army Corps in question. It was commanded by General von Franseyks, who, in virtue of seniority, had the nominal direction of all the operations, which were, however, supervised generally as regarded the Saxons by Prince George in person, whose heedlessness of danger must sorely have tried the nerves of his Staff. The contingent from the 2nd Army Corps supported, and co-operated with, the Würtemburgers. The Saxons had no backing but their own resolute valour. In all, the German troops engaged and immediately supporting may have numbered about 22,000. The programme, as I have given it you, was complicated more or less unexpectedly by a counter-offensive operation projected by the French against Villiers, no doubt with intentions of penetrating further, and of ultimately breaking through the cordon. Thus it fell out that as the Germans were pressing on to the attempt of driving the French out of Brie and Champigny, Messieurs the French were simultaneously pouring out with intent to take Villiers. When two bodies are going opposite ways in the same groove, it is a law of nature that a collison is the result. When the two bodies are armies, a fight is inevitable. Such events of that fight as came under my personal observation I shall endeavour to recount; but it is necessary first to give a brief description of the nature of the ground on which it took place. On the road to Noisy the south bank of the Marne is low, with a gradual rise, furrowed by inconsiderable rectangular depressions. As

one reaches Noisy and looks southward, he sees towards Brie, and athwart the neck of the loop, a broad flat, affording favourable scope for military evolutions. From this plain toward Villiers there rises gradually a low but shaggy elevation, covered mostly with copsewood and vinyards. This elevation is not continuous to Villiers. There are occasional depressions, the debouchments of which cause the trivial hollows which occur on the road to Noisy. The general tendency is nevertheless upward, so that the table-land at the back of which lies Villiers is higher than any ground between it and the plain. The ridge, therefore, although hampered by hedges and brushwood, would form no bad standpoint for offering resistance to a force which, having deployed on the plain, should attempt to carry it, if it were not that it is swept by a direct fire from Fort Nogent at easy range, and enfiladed at longer range, but still effectually, from the batteries on Mount Avron.

When I crossed the river the hour already was considerably past nine. It seemed to me that Noisy was an eligible point from which to observe the operations, and accordingly I directed my way thither. I never wish to travel such a road again, nor to reach such a destination. The shells from Avron were coming very thick. Now they fell with a great splash into the Marne at my feet, starring the placid water as a stone stars a mirror; now there was a great bang on the road, and a belch of white smoke, or a dull thud on the frosty ground above. If the road was bad, Noisy itself was. It seemed as if the gunners in Avron and Rosny and Nogent were determined that not one stone of it should be left upon another. Now it was a shower of slates, as a shell crashed through a roof, rafting the solid rafters as if they had been laths. Now half the side of a house went bodily as a huge projectile struck and crunched it. I

the shortness of the range, strange to say, there was one element of safety. The fire had to be direct, not plunging, and, so massive were the walls, that if one could only manage to get two or three of them between him and the forts, he occupied a position of precarious safety. Brie divided with Noisy the attentions of the French batteries, and it appears that Brie is opener. I had heard that the 107th Regiment had made a dash into Brie out of Rosny early in the morning, and I wondered much how it fared with them. Hard enough, beyond doubt, but could they hold the place under such a ding-dong pelting? By ten o'clock the question was resolved. First, there came a drove of French prisoners, red-breeched regulars, up toward Noisy, along the slight shelter afforded by the use of the road. Then came Saxon soldiers, more prisoners, and finally the bulk of the 107th, in very open order, and making the most of the few opportunities for cover. It was not a pleasant way to traverse. The forts fired heavily upon captors and captured alike, and more than one Frenchman fell slain by missiles hurled from French weapons. As the struggling columns came up I learned that the 107th, in its rapid rush in the morning, had surprised the occupants of Brie; some were asleep, others were composedly drinking their coffee. There was but trifling resistance, and nearly five hundred prisoners had been taken, including eight officers. The reason for the relinquishment of Brie on the part of the 107th was not far to seek. The terrible and persistent fire from the forts rendered it utterly untenable. It would have been folly—sheer Quixotry—to remain in a place teeming with bursting shells. No good could have been achieved by holding it under such conditions. The troops, compelled, that they might escape annihilation, to concentrate their attention solely on cover, could not

possibly have acted in any way on the offensive. As this contingency must have been the sole purpose of the occupancy, its impracticability simply nullified the position in a strategic sense. In a physical sense, the shells were rapidly nullifying the occupants.

The prisoners looked sturdy fellows, and anything but ill-fed. Their heart was good, too, if one might judge from passing expressions. A sergeant bade me "bon jour" as he went by, and told me cheerily that if anyone indulged the anticipation of a speedy capitulation of Paris, he was extremely out in his reckoning. Food was plentiful, he said, with a laugh, and the programme was sorties every day in every direction. I believe it was this laughing philosopher who afterwards gave up a proclamation of General Ducrot, dated the 28th ult., and setting forth that he did not mean to re-enter Paris alive. I dare swear he will not do so if he should chance to fall into the hands of the Germans. A drumhead court-martial and a volley from a firing party will assuredly be his fate, and I, for one, say, serve him right. There was found also, I learn, on one of the prisoners, a proclamation emanating from General Trochu, that commander with "plan on the brain," announcing that the time had now come for making great sorties, since the German, or, as he calls it, the Prussian, line had been greatly weakened (perhaps by the fall of Metz), and that his plan was to peg away at sorties till he had cut his way through. The prisoners were escorted back to Chelles, where, at a late period of the day, I saw them penned in the yard of the Mairie.

As the procession from Brie had finished filing through Noisy, an ominous sight met my eye in another direction as I peered through a loophole I had contrived. There, on the gradual slope of the further bank of the Marne

under the wing of Fort Nogent, and extending right and left along the line of the Chaumont railway,. were dense columns of French infantry. How they came there I know not; it was as if the spectacle had sprung up by magic. Now they stood fast, closing up as the fronts of the battalions halted; then there was a slow movement forward, till the head of the column dipped out of sight between the village of Nogent and the river. Then there seemed a final halt, and the dense masses stood there, the bayonets glittering in the sun, as if the men who carried them had come out to be spectators of the effects of that shell-fire which was cutting the air above their heads. But, little by little, there was a gradual trickling off, as it appeared, down to the bight of the river, between Nogent and Brie. Was there a bridge there? There was the railway bridge, a lofty viaduct, but there was a gap in one of its arches that rendered it useless. Presently, on the plain to the south of Brie, there became visible a knot of red breeches, that grew denser and denser every moment. Simultaneously the whole sprang into life. From the farm buildings about Tremblay, from St. Maur and Joinville, there poured out vast bodies of French troops, deploying at the double. The line seemed to extend right athwart the neck of the loop. What happened to Champigny I know not from personal observation; but I have been informed that the Wurtemburgers, after some desperate fighting, had driven the French out of it not long after eight o'clock, to be in their turn subjected to a violent attack and partial expulsion by the right of the formation to which I have just referred. The Tirailleurs dashed into the thickets lining the foot of the rise, and scrambled up through the winebergs. The troops behind them followed in serried columns. Whence had they come? They had crossed during the night, and

occupied the loop. Their bridges must have been between Joinville and Nogent, and the nullification of Brie enabled the utilization, at the later hour, of yet another bridge somewhere between Brie and the railway viaduct.

Noisy seemed no place for a man who valued his liberty. The Bois de Grace lying in front of Champs afforded a favourable cover for a détour into the rear of Villiers, which evidently was the point for which the French advance was intended. That force—I refer exclusively to the section which threatened Villiers—must have been at least 20,000 strong. How large was the force with which the Wurtemburgers and their good friends of the 2nd Army Corps had to deal towards Champigny I have no means of even roughly estimating. Surely in these dense columns, standing in support under Nogent, there could not have been less than 20,000 men. But directly and face to face with it was the 20,000 men of the left advance with whom the 10,000 Saxons had to cope. Not with them alone, but with those terrible projectiles also, a storm of which incessantly clashed on to the upper ground on which stands Villiers, and into the glades behind it.

General Codrington, in a recent letter to a contemporary, appears to me to address a polite request to war correspondents that they will get themselves shot with neatness and despatch. He would be glad to learn whether the tactical arrangements as to skirmishers, columns of companies, and brigades are carried out in real war under fire according to manœuvring practice in peace. The railway is now open to Lagny, and Lagny is only nine kilometres in the rear of Chelles. There will probably be a good deal of fighting in this locality for some time to come, and if General Codrington has a fancy for brushing up his Crimean experiences I shall be happy

lend him a field-glass, and further to point out an eligible position in the neighbourhood of Villiers, whence he will be able to sweep the flat terrain in the bend of the Marne, and to experience also the polite attentions of Forts Nogent and Rosny. Of the manner of the French formation, I can only say that their skirmishers came out with as much regularity as if the day's work had been a peaceful parade. The deployment sprang up with immense rapidity and seeming discipline, but there appeared to be considerable looseness in the formation, a total want of interval, and, indeed, in places, an overlapping of battalions.

Had there been nothing else to do on the part of the Saxons but to repulse an assault on Villiers, directed solely and straightly against it, the task would have been comparatively simple and not very bloody, notwithstanding the artillery fire. But the French advance, threatening in its deployment as it did to sweep right on, overlapping Villiers, up the space between that village and Noisy, and so to get through upon Champs, called for other tactics. Villiers could only serve as a position on which to lean the Saxon left. It became necessary to meet the French in the open. From behind Villiers the several regiments came out to the right on to the brow and under the shell-fire. As the French troops came up the gentle aclivity, the guns of the forts continued to play without interruption. So narrow was the margin that I question much whether a shell or two did not find its billet in the French ranks. I stood by the 108th Regiment as it quitted the position in which it had found some shelter. A couple of young lieutenants gaily shook hands with a Hussar aide-de-camp, who had just ridden up with an order, as they passed him to go out into the battle. On went the regiments in their dense columns of companies, the shells now crashing

into the ranks, now exploding in the intervals. Line was formed, the rear files pelting up at the double, and in a twinkling less than fifty yards separated the combatant lines. Then came a volley, then a venomous file-firing, and the French broke and gave ground. It was only to back into the next dip to let the guns of the fort go to work again. The Saxons had perforce to find what cover they might. When the 108th Regiment came back—it had not been gone twenty minutes—thirty-five officers out of forty-five had gone down. Neither of the blithe lieutenants were to the fore. And now came a lull in the musketry fire, just as a few minutes before there had been a lull in the cannon fire. The Saxons could not get their artillery into action with advantage. The ground itself was unfavourable, while the fire from the forts must, in the nature of things, have speedily silenced the field guns. Therefore, this great advantage was lost to them—an advantage only to be appreciated by those who have seen German artillery in action.

What I have been writing of took place before noon. After a little the artillery fire from the forts slackened considerably, and the French infantry made no demonstration on the German left, however, about Champigny, it was evident that hard fighting was going on. About one the French made another advance, having, as I believed, received considerable reinforcements. The Saxon infantry confronted them on the challenge, with the old result. But a different policy was this time adopted. It was plain the only escape from the terrible thunderbolts lay in getting to close quarters with the French infantry, unless, indeed, a retrograde movement was to be made, and that was not to be thought of. So when the French fell back, the Saxons followed on, as if they wanted to settle the question with the bayonet-point. It was the old motto, "*Vorwärts, immer vorwärts!*"

But the *vorwärts* was very slow. What happened for the next hour I could only guess by the constant crackling of the small-arms. The forts confined themselves seemingly for the most part to firing into and over Champigny and Villiers. But at length the French were visible slowly and stubbornly falling back across the north side of the neck, the Saxons pushing them hard, the French ever and anon rallying.

On this portion of the plain south of Brie there was a prolonged struggle. I understand the Saxons were striving to get at and cut the obnoxious pontoon-bridge. But this was an impossibility when Fort Nogent went to work again with the terrible accuracy of which the short range admitted. The combatants parted about three o'clock, both sides falling back. The fort fire continued some little time longer. What shall I say of the result? Not much have the Saxons gained—was there much to gain? The Wurtenburgers hold, I believe, one end of Champigny. According to my information, Brie to-night stands empty and desolate—it may be, wounded men are groaning in its cellars. There were French in it this morning, later there were Saxons [illegible] is all. But look at the bloody side of the picture. The number of dead I cannot ascertain. I fear the German wounded are over 1,000 men. The French, if they have lost fewer in killed and wounded—a matter as to which I am unable to do more than draw an inference—have seen the last, until the war is over, of some 500 stout soldiers. It is true they will eat no more of the stores of food in Paris, but this must be but poor consolation.

The French loss in these operations was very heavy. In letters from Paris, written a week after, it was computed at 10,000 men. Probably they inflicted equal loss upon their enemy. But the end had not been gained. The iron girdle

around Paris had not been destroyed. A junction with the Army of the Loire had not been effected, and that army itself had been compelled to renounce the hope of saving Paris. In an order of the day announcing the termination of the sortie, General Ducrot said, that if he had persevered in his plan after the resistance he had encountered, he should only have courted disasters and imperilled the cause of the defence. With the failure of that sortie and the dispersion of the Army of the Loire, a series of important operations were brought to a close, and here our work of selection from the war correspondence may for the time be suspended.

Before closing this collection of letters, we may be permitted to notice one enterprise which grew out of the publication of the correspondence of the *Daily News*, and on which the mind may dwell with a serener satisfaction than upon many of the scenes and events recorded in this volume. On the 21st of September, a corre[redacted]dent wrote from Briey an account of the co[redacted]ch he found the people of the French [redacted]en Metz, Nancy and Sedan. It was there[redacted]d that in the sections of country that had [redacted]sed by the hostile armies, nothing remained [redacted] provisions that had been accumulated in time[redacted]peace. The houses, stables, and barns had been b[redacted]ed or riddled with cannon-shots. The fields and meadows were trampled down by the tread of martial hosts. Neither cereals nor grass had been harvested that autumn. All the beasts of burden, and all their beeves, sheep, and swine had been taken from them. There remained not even seed-corn. Starvation stared the people in the face, and famine and pestilence were to be feared in the coming winter and spring. These representations were sustained by an array of local and other authority, which placed their accuracy beyond doubt, and in many quarters a hope was expressed that some opportunity might be allowed to

the benevolent to manifest their sympathy with the suffering French in a practical manner. In this way "The French Peasant Relief Fund" arose. Just at the right moment, a gentleman, with every qualification, Mr. W. H. Bullock, of Baliol College, kindly consented to proceed to the spot and administer the relief which English beneficence was affording, and he has continued the work in association with a number of colleagues, whose sufficient reward is the satisfaction of seeing suffering mitigated and sorrow diminished by their labours. Of those whose hearty co-operation should not be unrecorded, the names may be mentioned of Mr. R. D. Wilson, of Lincoln's Inn; Captain Goodenough, R.N.; Captain St. John Mildmay, Rifle Brigade; Mr. W. Cross, Weybridge Heath; and Miss Cross; Mons. André Ninnin, banquier, Sedan, and Mr. A. Jerningham. In this connection the ready and sustained assistance of the Hon. J. S. Lumley, H.M. Minister at Brussels, c[redacted] be too cordially acknowledged. By the third week in D[redacted] £13,000 had been raised for the Fund, the whol[redacted]is applied to its benevolent purposes, without any de[redacted] expenses of management or agency.

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